University of Alberta

Pysanka: The Ukrainian Easter Egg in Canada

by

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

in

Ukrainian Folklore

Department of Modern Languages and Cultural Studies

Edmonton, Alberta
Fall 2005

0-494-09046-4

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Abstract

The Ukrainian Easter egg, *pysanka*, has deep roots in European tradition. In Canada, the pysanka continued to exist an develop within Ukrainian communities, demonstrating both continuity and change in terms of transmission, form and design, production, function and meaning. Both continuity and change were accompanied and influenced by certain historical, social, cultural, political, and economic conditions in the "New Country." This phenomenon was removed from its old context and incorporated into new social and cultural environments. As a result, it acquired new significance representing "Ukrainianness" in a multicultural society.

Although very diverse among different communities, generations and individuals, the pysanka as evolved in Canada is characterized by certain distinctive patterns. This study analyzes the pysanka phenomenon and constructs a formal theoretical framework for its evolutionary process. I propose the "Old Country," "National/Ethnic," "Popular" and "Individualistic" paradigms as useful categories for understanding the pysanka in Canada.

Acknowledgements

My sincere appreciation and gratitude flies across the ocean to my parents Hanna and Vasyl' Lesiv and my brother Taras in Ukraine for their constant spiritual support and inspiration, for their heartfelt concerns about and unwavering confidence in me, which I always feel, despite the huge geographic distances.

I am deeply indebted to Dr. Bohdan Medwidsky. His earnest devotion to his work has resulted in the establishment of the Ukrainian Folklore Centre at the University of Alberta, where I have had a chance to learn, to think and to accomplish my academic goals under the leadership of talented professors. My thankfulness extends to the generous donors of the Ukrainian Folklore Centre for their financial support.

I acknowledge my indebtedness, appreciation and gratitude to Dr. Andriy Nahachewsky, who was a source of warm encouragement, providing me with stimulating intellectual help and challenging me to think and rethink my work over and over. It is largely because of his wisely critical eyes that examined every page of this thesis that it has come to fruition.

I want to express my sincere gratitude to my respondents, who kindly opened the doors of their homes, shared their memoirs, ideas and experiences with me and showed me their beautiful artistic works.

My deep appreciation and gratefulness goes to my friends and colleagues Radomir Bilash, Nadya Foty, Vincent Rees and Anna Kuranicheva for their great help and support in the process of research and writing.

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Introduction

As a constituent part of Ukrainian material culture, the pysanka[1] has deep roots in the old European tradition. Having been transferred to new soil over a hundred years ago, it has been developing among Ukrainian communities in Canada since then, reflecting both continuity and change. Today, it represents one of the most popular forms of creative expression among Ukrainian Canadians, serving as a distinctive ethnic symbol in Canada's multicultural environment.

The objective of this thesis is to observe the evolution of Ukrainian Canadian pysanky from the time of first settlers until the present and to construct a theoretical framework that aids in understanding their development in this country.

Part of this study is based upon the ethnographic research method – fieldwork – including observation and interviews. Part of the fieldwork is related to the "Local Culture and Diversity on the Prairies" project, which documents everyday life and its variations in western Canada's rural communities among people of Ukrainian, French, German and English backgrounds up to 1939.[2] A number of interviews conducted by the fieldworkers of the Ukrainian team are cited in this thesis. I was a member of this team from May to July 2004 conducting interviews, and from February to April 2005 creating indexes for interviews conducted by other fieldworkers.

Although the questionnaire for this project was not focused specifically on the pysanka, it did include some questions about it in the context of Easter celebration. The

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[1] *Pysanka* is the Ukrainian term for Easter egg (with ornamental motifs written on its surface). This noun is formed out of the verb "*pysaty*" which means "to write." *Pysanky* is its plural form.

[2] This project is spearheaded at the Ukrainian Folklore Centre at the University of Alberta, and is a collaboration with other universities across western Canada. For a detailed description and discussion of the project see www.arts.ualberta.ca/Local_Culture/.

"Local Culture" project gives us an overall picture of the pysanka-writing tradition in Canada's prairie provinces among the first Ukrainian settlers and their descendants. The study also suggests some cultural and social contexts in which this tradition was developed or abandoned (topics about community, services and businesses available in the community, religious practices within families, etc).

I conducted additional interviews specifically for the present study. The questionnaire prepared for these interviews concentrated specifically on pysanky, and most of the respondents were pysanka writers. My interviewee group was identified primarily by the "snowball" method, suggested personal acquaintances of previous respondents. The interviewees range from teenagers to those in their late 80s. These respondents shed light on the details of pysanka-writing as practiced in Canada among specific individuals over time. Although all the participants currently live in the Edmonton area, some representatives of the older generation described the tradition from rural territories of western Canada as well. They discussed this phenomenon as practiced on the prairie farms where they grew up. Such individuals allow us to trace continuity and change in their pysanka activities and reveal the factors that affected them.

A great deal of empirical data for this study was collected from three women's periodicals: *Zhinochyi svit* [Women's world], the monthly journal of the *Orhanizatsia Ukrainok Kanady* [Ukrainian Women's Organization of Canada (UWOC)] (published since 1950);[3] *Promin* [Ray] published monthly by the *Soiuz Ukrainok Kanady*

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[3] Before 1950, this organization had a separate column in the newspaper *Novyi shliakh* [New way].

[Ukrainian Women's Association of Canada (UWAC)] (since 1960);[4] and the quarterly magazine *Nasha doroha* [Our way], issued by the *Liga Ukrains'kykh Katolyts'kykh Zhinok Kanady* [Ukrainian Catholic Women's League of Canada (UCWLC)] (since 1970). It seems that the women's organizations publishing these periodicals were the leaders in the popularization of the pysanka in Canada. They are the earliest institutions to have incorporated this phenomenon significantly in their activities, and to have actively distributed the information about them across Canada.[5] (These sources have highlighted the topic of the pysanka most consistently and intensively, in comparison with others).[6]

Due to the fact that the periodicals appeared much later than the organizations themselves,[7] some data were collected from published reports on their early activities, especially from N. Kohuska's work *Chvert' stolittia na hromad'skii nyvi* [Twenty five years of the Ukrainian Women's Association of Canada], published in 1951. Kohuska focuses specifically on this organization's contribution towards Ukrainian material culture from 1926 to 1951. Also, several of my respondents were active members of these (and other) organizations. Their interviews provide insights into the pysanka as part of the organizations' activities from an insider's perspective.

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[4] Since 1929 up to 1960, the UWAC contributed a women's page to the newspaper *Ukrains'kyi holos* [Ukrainian voice].

[5] Other Ukrainian Canadian institutions have also actively incorporated the Easter egg into their activities. Since the principle goal of the present study was to trace the patterns of pysanka' s evolution rather than to provide an exhaustive list of historical events related to this phenomenon, I focus on the institutions that reveal the patterns most fully.

[6] While conducting research for this study, I looked through different Ukrainian Canadian periodicals from the first part of the 20th century in order to trace the earliest notes on the pysanka that appeared in print. Among them are *Kaliendar Kanadiis'koho farmera* [Calendar of Canadian Farmer], *Kaliendar Ukrains'koho holosu* [Calendar of Ukrainian Voice], *Zamors'kyi visnyk* [Overseas Herald] , *Klenovyi lyst* [Maple Leaf], *Kameniari* [Stone-crushers], *Zveno* [Link], *Borot'ba za voliu* [Struggle for freedom], *Iliustrovanyi kaliendar Kanadyis'koho ukraintsia* [Illustrated calendar of Ukrainian Canadian], *Ditochyi svit* [Children's world], *The New Canadian*, *Ukrains'ko-kanads'kyi visnyk* [Ukrainian-Canadian Herald], *Klych* [The Call] and others. Although some pysanka-related articles appeared in early Ukrainian Canadian periodicals from time to time, it was the UWAC's magazine *Zhinochyi svit* that first started actively presenting the pysanka in print in 1950. *Promin'* and *Nasha doroha* appeared later and have been of a very similar character in regards to this phenomenon.

[7] The UWAC was founded in 1926 in Saskatoon on the basis of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and eventually numbered about 160 branches all over Canada (Kohus'ka 22-3; Woycenko 453). As part of a Nationalist group, the UWOC, named after Ukrainian heroine Olha Basarab, was established in Winnipeg in 1930 (Knysh 7). The UCWLC represents Ukrainian Catholic women's activity. It was established in 1944 and numbered 152 branches all over Canada at its peak (Yankiwska xix; Husar-Struk 366).

I examined the collections of pysanky in Ukrainian Canadian Archives and Museum of Alberta (UCAMA), as well as in the UCWLC and UWAC's museums in Edmonton.[8]

A great number of popular materials (mostly books and brochures) on the Ukrainian pysanka published and/or distributed in Canada add to the empirical data used for this study.[9] Information from current internet websites dealing with the Ukrainian Easter egg is also included in this thesis.[10]

The phenomenon of the pysanka is discussed in this work from both *emic* and *etic* perspectives.[11] Anthropologist James Lett defines the terms in a way that is useful for the present study:

> …*Emic* refers to the native's viewpoint; *etic* refers to the scientist's viewpoint. *Emic* constructs are descriptions and analyses conducted in terms of the conceptual schemes and categories considered meaningful by the participants in the event or situation being described and analyzed. *Etic* constructs are descriptions and analyses conducted in terms of the conceptual schemes and categories considered meaningful by the community of scientific observers. (1987: 62)

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[8] These museums and their collections of pysanky will be discussed in Chapter 3 (Subchapter 3.1.4 "Function").
[9] Specific popular sources on the pysanka will be discussed in Chapter 3 (Subchapter 3.1.2 "Transmission").
[10] Among the websites that I looked through are http://chocolatmoderne.com/PBA.html, http://www.cs.unc.edu/%7Eyakowenk/pysanky.html, http://agt.net/public/jostan/egg.htm, http://www.yevshan.com and others.
[11] The categories of *emic* and *etic* were first used in print by a linguist Kenneth Pike (in 1954) and anthropologist Marvin Harris (in 1964) (Headland, Pike and Harris 15).

In accordance with these definitions, I consider the *emic* perspective as the one that reflects the view of people writing pysanky while the *etic* perspective is my own interpretation and analysis of certain aspects discussed by them.

The pysanka tradition was brought to Canada and carried on by the first Ukrainian settlers as a regular component of their celebration of Easter. Gradually, it was changed by their descendants as well as by members of the subsequent waves of Ukrainian immigration to this country. My research reveals that the pysanka's evolution has indeed been a complex process. This phenomenon branched out simultaneously into different sub-traditions, each undergoing marked changes over time. These changes were influenced by various historical, social, political, cultural and economic conditions.

I propose to divide the phenomenon of the Ukrainian Canadian pysanky into four contrasting paradigms, naming them "Old Country," "National/ Ethnic," "Popular" and "Individualistic." This theoretical approach is partly based on and greatly inspired by Robert Klymasz's ideas on the development of Ukrainian folk art in Canada[12] and Andriy Nahachewsky's work on Ukrainian Canadian dance.[13] The discussion of the pysanka within the National/Ethnic paradigm is also inspired by Natalie Kononenko's ideas on structured rituals in Soviet and post-Soviet Ukraine.[14]

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[12] These ideas are presented in his introductory article to the catalogue of the exhibition entitled "Continuity and Change: The Ukrainian Folk Heritage in Canada" held in Ottawa in 1972. Klymasz constructs a general theoretical framework for changes that Ukrainian folk art has undergone since the time of the first settlers. He defines the Ukrainian cultural experience in Canada as "composed of three distinct, yet interrelated parts" labeling them "Pioneer Folk," "National Art," and "Ethnic Pop."

[13] In his manuscript "Dance Across Cultures," Nahachewsky deals with different conceptual issues related to dance practices such as "vival," "revival," "national," "ethnic" dances and many others. The labeling of the four categories "contrasting paradigms" is inspired by Nahachewsky's ideas presented in his article "Avramenko and the Paradigm of National Culture." The author discusses the conceptual issues of staged Ukrainian dance in the interwar period within three contrasting paradigms: "participatory," "national" and "spectacular" (Nahachewsky 2003).

The contrasting paradigms presented above are based on the pysanka in pre-emigration Ukraine as a source from which its Ukrainian Canadian history started. Each paradigm of the Easter egg discussed in this work represents a separate pattern of its Canadian development. Each pattern is based on my subjective view of the characteristic changes that the pysanka tradition underwent in this country. To name each paradigm, I chose a 'key word' to represent and characterize the entire pattern. To illustrate the difference among them clearly, the pysanky of each paradigm will be discussed in terms of the same key themes: transmission, form, design, function, production and meaning. Such an approach is inspired by early Ukrainian ethnographers and their works devoted to the pysanka in Ukraine.[15]

Since the themes presented above are very complex and may signify different things simultaneously, let me establish their definitions. The term *transmission* refers to the process where a pysanka writer acquires certain knowledge and/or experience, and passes it on to others. By *form*, I understand the physical shape of the pysanka (in most cases the kind of egg), while by *design* I mean the artistic arrangement on this *form*. The term *production* deals with the technical methods of writing/making the pysanka. *Function* refers to the various activities with which the pysanky are associated. *Meaning* refers to the sense of purpose felt by the people who participate in the given tradition. In many cases, the latter two categories are closely interrelated: while the *function* deals with what happens to the pysanky in certain cultural contexts, the *meaning* deals with why the activities are undertaken and what they signify for a person or community.

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[14] These ideas were presented in a public lecture "Soviet Ritual/Post-Soviet Ritual" given by Kononenko at the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies (University of Alberta) (2005).
[15] These sources will be briefly discussed in Chapter 1.

Although contrasting in their conceptual nature, the four proposed paradigms coexisted, overlapping and influencing each other over the century-long history of the Ukrainian pysanka in Canada. They interpenetrate each other in practice, and are separated here for heuristic purposes.

This work consists of five chapters and a conclusion. In Chapter 1, I survey Ukrainian and western scholarly literature published on the Easter egg. I focus separately on the early ethnographic wor[illegible]ealing with this phenomenon (second part of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century) in the different territories of Ukraine. Since these sources appeared in print in approximately the same time as the first two waves of Ukrainian immigration to Canada arrived,[16] they shed light on the pysanka as it was brought to the new world. On the basis of these works, I highlight the key aspects of the pysanka tradition in Ukraine for comparison with the Ukrainian Canadian Easter egg.

Chapters 2, 3, 4, and 5 of this work are devoted to the Old Country, National/Ethnic, Popular and Individualistic paradigms respectively. The first subchapters in each case (2.1, 3.1, 4.1, and 5.1.) are mostly of an informative character, presenting mainly empirical data. More theoretical interpretation of this data is presented in the second subchapters (2.2, 3.2, 4.2, and 5.2.), which are devoted to conceptual issues related to the pysanka's evolution within each paradigm. For this analysis, I incorporate theoretical sources dealing with the concepts of folk art, aesthetics, ethnic identity, tradition, and others, as relevant to each pattern.

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[16] The first wave of Ukrainian immigration to Canada took place in the period of time between 1891 and 1914. The second wave arrived in this country in the interwar period in the last century (Martynovych 1985: 11; 1991: 21-4, 453).

Richard Anderson's concept of four western aesthetic criteria will be touched upon within the discussions of all paradigms. Therefore, it is worthwhile to focus briefly on his ideas now. Anderson defines four criteria (theories) in western aesthetics: *mimetic, instrumental, emotionalist, and formalist*. According to him, artistic activities in "western" culture tend to aspire to one or another of these aesthetic categories:

> *Mimetic theories* focus on the relationship between the work of art and some material object in the sensible world that the work of art "imitates" either literally or else by capturing it in an idealized form.
> *Instrumental* [or *pragmatic*] theories emphasize the functional capacity of art, requiring art to make some sort of positive contribution to the well-being of individual or society.
> *Emotionalist* theories center on neither the material nor the social but on the psychological realm of inner experience and feelings of the individual…Emphasis may be on the artist's expression of emotions, or cathartic purging of audience members' feeling, or on the creative art.
> *Formalist* theories do not deal with material, social, or psychological issues, but rather with aesthetic or technical challenges of the art work itself. Under the paradigm of formalism, art is thought to be a unique manifestation of "significant form," a manipulation of an artistic medium that is capable of producing a unique and arresting response in the aesthetically attuned audience member. (2004[1990]: 234)

Before discussing the pysanka as incorporated into "western" cultural context, let me present the sources devoted to this phenomenon and underline the tradition in Ukraine.

Chapter 1

The Pysanka in Ethnographic Sources

The Old Country pysanka represents the source from which the evolution of the Ukrainian Canadian Easter egg began. A survey of some of the major ethnographic works devoted to this phenomenon will outline the tradition and help identify varying approaches to studying this phenomenon.[17]

The pysanka has been attracting the interest of Ukrainian researchers and stimulating extensive discussion since the late 19th century. Ukrainian researchers such as Mykhailo Sumtsov in his article "Pysanky" (1891) and Vadym Shcherbakivs'kyi in his work "*Osnovni elementy ornamentatsii ukrains'kykh pysanok ta ikhnie pokhodzhennia: Studia*" [Principle elements of the ornamentation of the Ukrainian pysanka and their origins: a study] (1925) emphasize the pre-Christian origin of the pysanka, defining it as an ancient pagan symbol of the rebirth of the sun and nature, characteristic for many ancient cultures. Moreover, they focus on particular pysanka motifs from all over Ukraine and neighboring territories, trying to trace their origins and interpreting their archaic meanings. In addition, Sumtsov concentrates on the transmission, production methods and function of the pysanka in different ethnographic regions of Ukraine.[18]

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[17] There have been a great number of ethnographic works devoted to the pysanka in Ukraine since the late 19th century. This study is limited to major sources that highlight it in terms of a variety of key themes and discuss it from conceptually different perspectives. For other early Ukrainian ethnographic works devoted to this phenomenon see Andrievs'kyi's *Bibliohrafia literatury z ukrains'koho fol'kloru* [Bibliography of Ukrainian folklore].

[18] The political map of Ukraine has been very different from the map of its ethnographic regions. The contemporary political map is divided into 24 regions called *oblasti* [pl.]. Although very fuzzy, the ethnographic boundaries are determined by certain cultural particularities, and one ethnographic region may embrace certain parts of a few oblasti. For example, the ethnographic region of Bukovyna covers the contemporary Chernivtsi oblast' and a small part of the Ivano-Frankiv'sk oblast'. Also, one oblast' may include a number of ethnographic regions. For instance, besides Bukovyna region, the Ivano-Frankivs'k oblast' contains the Hutsul, Pokuttia, and Boiko ethnographic regions (Bilan, Stel'mashchuk 209, 222, 255).

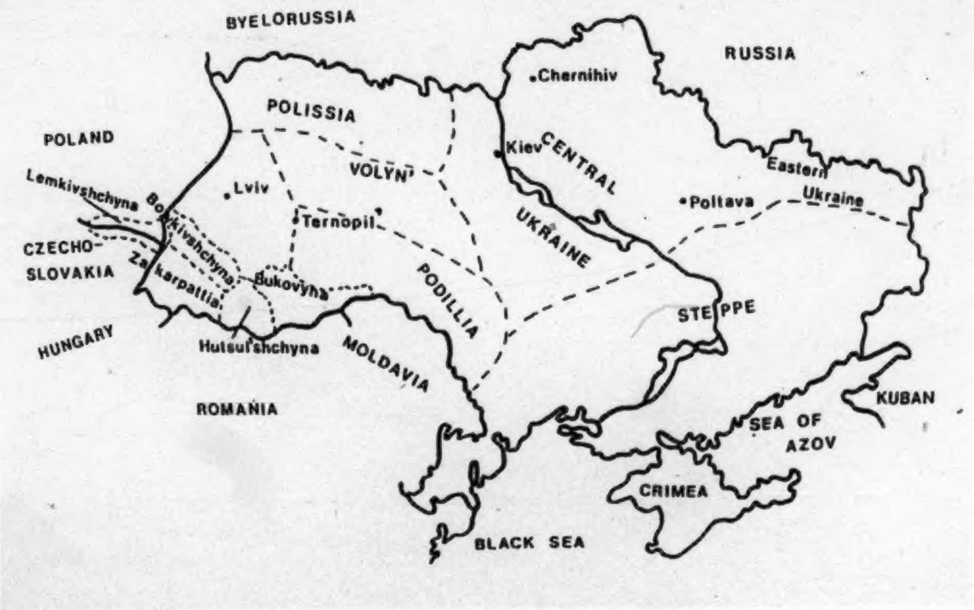
BYELORUSSIA
RUSSIA
Chernihiv
POLISSIA
POLAND
Kiev
CENTRAL
UKRAINE
Lemkivshchyna
Boikivshchyna
Lviv
VOLYN'
Eastern Ukraine
Poltava
Ternopil'
CZECHO-SLOVAKIA
Zakarpattia
Bukovyna
PODILLIA
STEPPE
HUNGARY
Hutsul'shchyna
MOLDAVIA
ROMANIA
KUBAN
SEA OF AZOV
CRIMEA
BLACK SEA

Figure 1. Map of Ukrainian ethnographic regions (Nahachewsky 1991).

S. Kul'zhynskii's study entitled *Lubenskii muzei E. G. Skarzhynskoi: Opisanie kollektsii narodnykh pysanok* [The E. G. Skarzhynskaia museum in Lubny: a description of the collection of folk pysanky] was published in 1899. Dealing with a particular collection of pysanky containing the items from the regions belonging to the territories of contemporary eastern and central Ukraine, Russia, Belarus and Poland, he focuses on similar themes: origins (also considering pysanky to be connected with ancient sun cults), function and meaning in the context of the old rituals. He also attends to the artistic aspects of the eggs and establishes a system of classification based on their designs.

Myron Korduba, in his research *"Pysanky na Halyts'kii Volyni"* [Pysanky of the region of Galician Volyn'] (1899) concentrates on this small territory of western Ukraine and discusses pysanky there in terms of production, transmission, function and local design specifics. In contrast to the previous three authors, Korduba consciously avoids discussing the origin of this tradition and the interpretation of its ancient symbolism. He notes the lack of primary sources for such analysis. His work is based mostly on the direct ethnographic method – fieldwork. With the same approach, Volodymyr Shukhevych researched the pysanka of the Hutsul region. This study appeared as a separate chapter, entitled "Pysanky," in volume 4 of his multivolume work *Hutsul'shchyna* (1899).

Iryna Hurhula analyzes the pysanky of two ethnographic regions in her work "*Pysanky skhidnoi Halychyny i Bukovyny v zbirtsi Natsional'noho muzeiu u L'vovi*" [The pysanky of eastern Galicia and Bukovyna in the collection of the National Museum in L'viv] (1929). Discussing the Easter eggs exclusively from an "art critic" point of view, Hurhula focuses on the compositional principles of the designs and the corresponding palette of colors.

During the Soviet period, less attention was devoted to this phenomenon in comparison with the pre-Soviet and post-Soviet time. Soviet works on the pysanka were mostly limited to the description of regional artistic characteristics. This descriptive approach reflected restrictions imposed by the regime on discussion of religion- and magic-related traditions. Oleksii Solomchenko researched this phenomenon in the Prykarpattia region (western Ukraine), mostly from an art critic's perspective. In 1964, he published an article "*Ornament pysanok Prykarpattia*" [The ornament of pysanky from Prykarpattia]. In 1969 Solomchenko included a separate chapter entitled "Pysanky" in his book *Narodni talanty Prykarpattia* [Folk talents of the Prykarpattia region]. The same "art history" approach is used by Borys Butnik-Sivers'kyi in his work *Ukrains'ke* *narodne mystetstvo: zhyvopys* [Ukrainian folk art: painting]. Pavlo Markovych's book *Ukrains'ki pysanky skhidnoi Slovachchyny* [Ukrainian pysanky of eastern Slovakia] (1972) is devoted to the pysanky of this particular region. Although the author focuses briefly on the historic origins of the pysanka and its role in the old magical rituals, he emphasizes that the latter disappeared as soon as the Soviet system was established and "enlightened" villagers in the region (39). The major part of this work is dedicated to the artistic particularities of the pysanky in this territory.

A great number of popular sources devoted to the phenomenon of the pysanka have been published in Ukraine since the time of the decline of Soviet power and the Declaration of Independence in 1991.[19] This period of time in Ukraine is connected with a great awakening of national consciousness and the revival and popularization of different kinds of folk culture, including the Easter egg. Recently, Solomchenko's scholarly and popular research on the pysanka was published as a book, entitled *Pysanky ukrains'kykh Karpat* [Pysanky of the Ukrainian Carpathians] (2002). This work embraces the ethnographic regions of Hutsul'shchyna, Pokuttia, Boikivshchyna, Bukovyna, and Lemkivshchyna (including eastern Slovakia). The author focuses on the historic roots of the pysanka tradition, its artistic and stylistic particularities, the symbolic meaning of its motifs, and the production methods of traditional and souvenir Easter eggs.

One can see three main trends in the literature, dealing with the pysanka in Ukraine. Sumtsov, Shcherbakivs'kyi and Kul'zhyns'kii devote much attention to pagan origins of this phenomenon and its meaning in ancient cults. Other scholars, such as

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[19] It is a very similar approach as that adopted in Canada by the builders of the National/Ethnic paradigm, as will be illustrated in Chapter 3. Some of these sources will be touched upon in Chapter 3, since they reached Ukrainian Canadians and contributed much to sustaining the tradition of the National/Ethnic pysanky.

Korduba and Shukhevych, concentrate on a number of key themes related to the Easter in its cultural context (transmission, production, function and design), while a third group, including Hurhula and most Soviet researchers, focus predominantly on the aspect of design. Furthermore, even while discussing the pysanka within the same key theme, different researchers show dissimilar analytical approaches and provide different interpretations. For example, while focusing on design, Sumtsov divides pysanka motifs into 5 categories: geometric, solar, floral, animal, those referring to surrounding objects and everyday life, and religious (363-383). In contrast to him, Shcherbakivs'kyi argues that the entire variety of Easter egg motifs fit into three categories: swastika, trivet, and rosette.

The ethnographic works on pysanky in Ukraine serve as a very significant source for the present study due to the rich factual data presented in them in terms of transmission, form and design, production, function, and meaning. Together, they provide a broad picture of this phenomenon in Ukraine, forming the fundamental basis for tracing its continuity and change in the new country. Furthermore, these scholarly works had a special influence in the development of the National/Ethnic Easter eggs, as will be illustrated in Chapter 3.

Only a few scholarly works devoted to the pysanka have been published in Canada. Stepan Kylymnyk's study "Pysanka" is included in volume 3 of his multivolume work *Ukrains'kyi rik u narodnykh zvychaiakh v istorychnomu osvitlenni* [Calendar Year in Ukrainian Folklore] (1969). Similar to his predecessors Sumtsov, Kul'zhyns'kii and Shcherbakivs'kyi, this author concentrates on the symbolic meaning of the pysanka in the context of old rituals and spring games, *vesnianky,* performed during the celebration of Easter. He also tries to classify pysanky according to their ornamental motifs. A brochure entitled *The Ukrainian Easter Egg in Canada* (1969), written by Robert Klymasz, deals specifically with the Ukrainian Canadian pysanka. The author provides general observations in terms of production methods, form, design and function, focusing on its stages of development: its retention by Ukrainian pioneers and its transformation into a symbol of Ukrainian ethnicity over time. American scholar Michael Owen Jones' article, entitled "A Folklorist's Viewpoint on Ukrainian Canadian Art" (1991) includes a brief interpretation of the Ukrainian-Canadian pysanky in terms of their purposes, forms and designs in the context of constructing the Ukrainian-Canadian identity.

English and American folklorist Venetia Newall's book *An Egg at Easter: A Folklore Study* (1971) is a substantial study of Easter eggs as a phenomenon of many world's cultures. The author's principle interests deal with the symbolism of the egg in the context of the tradition, and folk practices such as witchcraft and magic, egg games, and egg trees. She also looks at the human psychology behind the beliefs and performances related to the egg. In addition, the author describes a variety of production methods characteristic for Easter eggs in various cultures (French, Czechoslovakian, Hungarian, Lithuanian, Polish, Rumanian, Dutch, Russian, Ukrainian and many others).

A great number of publications on the pysanka of a popular character have been published in Canada. Due to their influence on the National/Ethnic pysanky, these sources will be discussed in Chapter 3.

What was the pysanka tradition long ago in Ukraine? On the basis of the early ethnographic works, its characteristic features will be generalized below. It is important to note that Ukrainian pysanka writing techniques, designs, function, meaning as well as transmission of this knowledge were characterized by a great diversity in different ethnographic regions.

Transmission

In the late 19th and early 20th century Ukraine, pysanka traditions were practiced mostly in rural communities. In all areas of Ukraine, writing Easter eggs was associated mainly with women and girls. (Sumtsov 1891:194-5; Shukhevych 1904: 220; Korduba 1899:171-2; Kul'zhynskii 1899: 53-5). Knowledge about the pysanka was transmitted informally from mother to daughter within a family and through other women in the narrow circle of a village. In most cases, it was passed on orally and visually: as she was writing herself, a practiced pysanka writer (a mother or a neighbour) instructed the beginners in this field by explaining and showing physically how to write. The context was intimate: the novices listened, watched and copied. In some areas, girls brought all the necessary equipment and materials as well as the patterned egg shells from the previous year (as samples for reproduction) together for writing sessions (Kul'zhyns'kii 54). In other territories, pysanka writers preferred to write privately, being afraid of the "evil eye" (Korduba 172). In still others, there were only one or a few pysanka writers in a village, who sold their Easter eggs to the rest of the community (Korduba 172; Kul'zhynskii 54).

The time of writing varied among different ethnographic regions as well. For example, while in some areas pysanky were written exclusively on Holy Thursday, in others they were made on work days during the 4th, 5th and 6th weeks of the Great Lent (Kul'zhynskii 51). In general, pysanky were written in the period of time prior to the Easter celebrations, since all were made specifically for this holiday. The egg could not be written long before Easter since it could not be physically preserved for a long time (Kul'zhynskii 50).

The writing process was often accompanied by magical and spiritual preparation, including special incantations and prayers. For example, in some areas, the dyes were supposed to be made only with water drawn from a well on Holy Thursday. It was believed that only on this day could the writing be successful and the pysanky would turn out to be beautiful (Korduba 172). In other villages, after having lowered the egg into a certain dye, the writer was supposed to keep it submersed for as long as it would take her to say the Lord's Prayer three times (Sumtsov 196).

Form and Design

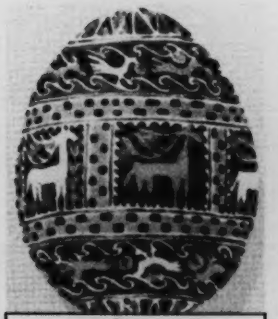

Figure 2. Pysanka. Hutsul region (Butnik-Sivers'kyi 1967: Fig. 54).

Pysanky were written almost exclusively on chicken eggs. In terms of motifs, their names and color palette, Easter eggs were characterized by a great diversity among different regions of Ukraine. This diversity was not part of the knowledge of a typical participant in the tradition in her village. Peasant societies are characterized by a sedentary lifestyle and relative geographic isolation. Most pysanka writers knew the

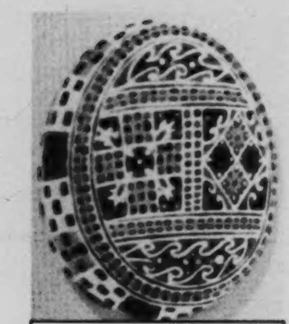

Figure 3. Pysanka. Hutsul region (Butnik-Sivers'kyi 1967: Fig. 54).

traditional designs used in their village and perhaps in a few villages nearly, but their geographic horizons did not extend much further.

On the etic level, however, pysanka researchers have focused a great deal of attention on comparisons among regions. From their works, one can learn that the pysanky of the Hutsul territory were very different from those of Podillia and Galician Volyn' areas. Hutsul pysanky were of miniature geometric and animal designs, densely filling the entire surface of the egg. They represented a very rich, bright palette of colors with the predominance of yellow, orange and red (Shukhevych 224-27).

In contrast to them, the pysanky from Podillia and Galician Volyn' were characterized by much larger and sparsely situated floral and geometric motifs written often only in two colors: red and yellow, black and yellow, red and white, or black and white (Hurhula 1929:139).

Moreover, pysanky often differed markedly even among neighbouring villages of the same region (Solomchenko 1969: 63). Easter eggs were named according to the ornamental motifs written on them.

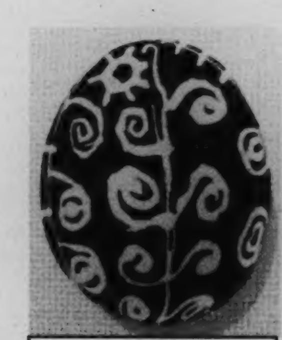

Figure 4. Pysanka. Volyn' region (Butnik-Sivers'kyi 1967: Fig. 54).

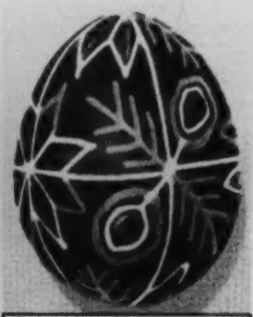

Figure 5. Pysanka. Volyn' region (Butnik-Sivers'kyi 1967: Fig. 54).

Production

The materials and equipment used for producing pysanky were usually easily available at the home of any given peasant and/or accessible from the environment that surrounded her. The pysanky were written with the help of beeswax, a stylus and dyes. The stylus, called *kystka* (or *kistka*), was an instrument with which the decorations were applied to the egg. The most widely known and used type of stylus was comprised of a small funnel attached to a stick. The funnel was made out of a small metal piece, bent around a needle with a minute opening at the tip. Melted wax in this funnel was applied to the egg shell as it flowed through the hole.

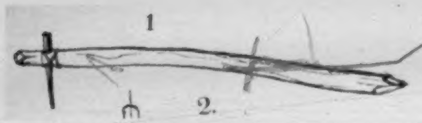

Figure 6. Homemade stylus, Hutsul region as documented by V. Shukhevych (221).

Liquid dyes were made from plants, roots, bark or berries - natural sources available in local flora. For example, people created yellow dyes from the bark of wild apple trees, onion skins or elderberry flowers (Sumtsov 196); green dyes could be made from periwinkle, green winter-crops (mostly rye), the leaves of beans, and other plants (Korduba 175). Already in the late 19th century, synthetic dyes were used in some areas (Korduba 175; Sumtsov 197; Shukhevych 222).

The process of writing pysanky was technically similar to batik. First, the basic lines that were supposed to remain white were written on the egg shell with melted wax. Then, the egg was lowered into a dye bath of the first and lightest color, usually yellow, and kept there until it reached the desired shade. It was then removed and dried. The dye did not penetrate the wax, so the surfaces covered in wax remained white on the yellow background. Areas on the surface of the egg that were planned to be yellow were next covered with the melted wax. If later lowered into an orange color, one would get the following result – white and yellow markings (covered temporarily with the wax) on an orange background. The process could be continued with red and other colors until the egg was finally colored with the darkest dye, often black. After all the colors had been added, the wax was removed by re-melting it near the flame of a candle, and wiping it off. The underlying colors were thus exposed and the pysanka was finished.

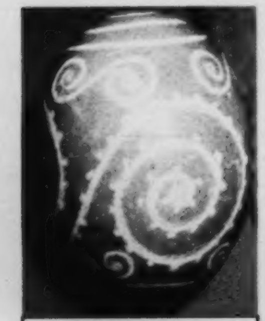
Figure 7. *Shkrobanka* scratched in Canada (UCWLC museum collection).

In a few regions, a different type of the pysanka called *shkrobanka* was made.[20] In this technique, the whole egg was dyed in one color, and then the design of the shkrobanka was scratched onto the surface with a needle or the point of a knife. The *krashanka* (or *halunka*), considered to be a simpler version of the pysanka, was widely practiced along with pysanky in all the regions of Ukraine.[21] These were boiled eggs dyed in one color, most often red.

Function

The strongest unifying functional feature of pysanky in different territories of Ukraine was their incorporation into the celebration of Easter. Pysanky were blessed in church on Easter and given away as gifts to loved ones, relatives, neighbours, priests and friends. For blessing in church, they were put in a basket along with traditional Easter food, including the paska [Easter bread], meat, butter, and boiled eggs (Korduba 179;

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[20] The noun *shkrobanka* (shkrabanka) is formed out of the verb *shkrobaty* meaning "to scratch." *Shkrobanky* is its plural form.
[21] The word *krashanka* is formed out of the verb *krasyty* meaning 'to color' in some regions. *Krashanky* is its plural form.

Kul'shynskii 66; Sumtsov 200-203; Shukhevych 227). More specific practices and beliefs often varied locally. In some regions, krashanky and pysanky were incorporated in different games such as, for example, "*kotiuchka*" [rolling pysanky] and "*navbytky*" or "*tsokanka*" [knocking of pysanky]. The latter was usually played between two people in order to test whose pysanka was stronger. Each person knocked their pysanka against the other's. The one that broke was forfeited to the "winner" (Sumtsov 207; Korduba 181). In some areas, this game was played by older women. It was believed that a woman having a stronger pysanka was more pious (Korduba 181). In some localities, pysanky (or krashanky) were believed to have power to bring a good harvest when buried in the ground. In others, pysanky were buried to induce *maruna* (a herb) to grow (Korduba 180). In certain territories, people kept their pysanky in the house or threw their shells onto the roof, expecting it to protect the house from fire, thunder and lightning (Korduba 180; Sumtsov 204). In some cases, it was believed that pysanky blessed in church protected people from the "evil eye" (Shukhevych 228; Sumtsov 205). In certain territories, the pysanka was credited with healing (Sumtsov 204-5). These localized rituals and beliefs are only a few of the many documented by the early Ukrainian ethnographers.

Meaning

The meaning of the pysanka was tightly interrelated with its function, as illustrated above. Beliefs in its magical power reflected the old peasant worldview and understanding of the universe. In many areas, the magical meaning of the pysanka started disappearing in the late 19th century (Kul'zhynskii 55), and this phenomenon continued to be practiced by villagers more often simply as a component of their customary social and religious lifestyle, inherited from their family ancestors.

Information on the particularities of practices and beliefs related to pysanky in different ethnographic regions were documented by early Ukrainian researchers mostly on the basis of direct fieldwork – observation and interviews. However, as mentioned earlier, scholars such as Sumtsov, Shcherbakivs'kyi, Kul'zhyns'kyi extend their discussions further by looking for pre-Christian roots and the symbolism of the pysanka and its separate motifs. These parts of the studies are mostly based on comparative observations of the pysanka and similar designs in other contexts and other cultures. Their conclusions are hypotheses and interpretations on the basis of extrapolation connecting widely disparate bits of evidence. For example, Sumtsov argues that the pysanka motif "tripod" "in ancient times had a mystical meaning as the symbol of the sun's movement around the heavenly firmament, and of fertility" (366).[22] According to Shcherbakivs'kyi, the motif "rosette" (or eight-point star) is "a symbol of the Sun-God" (25).[23] Due to the lack of primary data today, one cannot verify such interpretations and hypotheses about the meaning of the markings in ancient times. The origins and ancient symbolism of the pysanka are not the point of the present study. They are, however, very important influences on the pysanka of the National/Ethnic paradigm in Canada, and will be relevant to the discussion in Chapter 3.

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[22] Like any other language, Ukrainian and Russian often lose their linguistic and dialectic particularities in translation. Therefore, if an interview was conducted or a text was written in Ukrainian or Russian, I include the original quote in the footnotes (following Library of Congress transliteration) while the translation is given in the text. Unless otherwise noted, texts and interviews are translated by the author.

[Trikhvetr]... ime'l v drevnosti magicheskoe znachenie, kak' simvol' dvizheniia solntsa po tverdi nebesnoi i plodorodiia.

[23] *Rozeta abo vos'moramenna zvizda...simvol bozhestva sontsia.*

Prior to that, in Chapter 2, let us explore this cultural phenomenon for the first few decades in Canada - after it was transferred from its original context and before it was influenced by the National/Ethnic paradigm.

Chapter 2

2.1. The Pysanka of the Old Country Paradigm

> *Khto viz siudy rodynu ta zernynu,*
> *Khto til'ky ruky i ochi, povni sliz,*
> *A ot dyvak iz Ukrainy*
> *za pazukhoiu pysanku pryviz...*[24]
>
> Volodymyr Brovchenko

At the turn of the 19th century, under the rule of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Ukrainian peasants in the areas of Galicia in Bukovyna in Ukraine lived with "no special privileges and an enormous problem: the rapidly diminishing supply of their most precious possession – land" (Martynovych 1991: 4-5). Forced by such historical, social and economic conditions, they started coming to the Canadian prairies in the late 19th century, looking for a way to improve upon their meagre existence in the Old Country.[25]

Knowledge about the pysanka, as a constituent component of their Easter celebration, was brought by Ukrainian pioneers to the New country. The pysanka tradition was actively practiced by the first Ukrainian settlers and their descendants in the rural communities of western Canada.[26]

---

[24] *Someone brought here his family and seed,*
Another one brought only his hands and eyes full of tears,
While a strange one from Ukraine
Brought a pysanka in his pocket.

[25] For a detailed discussion of the conditions in Ukraine that caused mass immigration of the Ukrainian peasantry to Canada as well as early pioneers' experiences in the New Country see Orest Martynovych's *The Ukrainian Block Settlement in East Central Alberta, 1890-1930: A History* (7-55). Also see Martynovych's *Ukrainians in Canada: the Formative Period, 1891-1924* (3-55).

[26] I do not imply that the pysanka did not exist among Ukrainians in the cities in the time period discussed. However, the majority of the first Ukrainian immigrants settled in the rural territories of the Canadian prairies, as opposed to the second and especially third waves of immigration, whose immigrants settled more in the urban centres. It was not the goal of this research to provide quantitative information on the frequency of writing pysanky in the first half of the 20th century among Ukrainians. However, of the

As the name "Old Country" suggests, pysanky of this paradigm are tightly connected with the tradition in Ukraine. In the first few decades of the 20th century, Ukrainian Easter egg writing in the Canadian prairies remained very similar to that, which had been left back in the Old Country in terms of transmission, form and design, production methods, function, and meaning.

2.1.1. *Transmission*

Many interviewees reported that in the early years of the last century, knowledge about the pysanka was transmitted in the same way as in Ukraine - through generations within a family or local community: orally, visually, and informally in the social context of the appropriate Easter tradition. The interviewees also clearly indicated that most pysanka writers were female, similar to the situation in the Old Country. Most of the respondents involved in pysanka writing at that time recalled that they had learned about this tradition from their mothers and/or grandmothers. Rarely, their knowledge about pysanky was acquired from other women in the community. Like in the Old Country, early Ukrainian Canadian pysanky were written exclusively before Easter. Sofia Porayko-Kyforuk remembers her early experience:

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participants of the "Local Culture" project included in this research, those respondents who answered "no" to the question "Did anybody write *pysanky* in your family [prior to 1940]?" numbered approximately 15%, as opposed to those 85% who replied "yes" to this question. The individuals, whose families quit practicing pysanka-writing in the New Country, disclose a variety of reasons for that cessation. Among them was the domestic struggle for survival that did not include any spare time for cultural and spiritual activities (Kolodrubsky, J. Koralewicz, interviews); a conscious desire to assimilate in the Canadian society under the great pressure of Anglicization, which was palpable in the areas where the Ukrainian communities were quite small (M. Munsey, interview); religious factors such as the absence of Ukrainian churches in certain areas (Rizutto, Havirko, interviews) and joining non-Ukrainian confessions. Several noted that when their families joined Protestant churches, they immediately dropped the Old Country customs that did not fit into the practices of the new church. (L. Melnychak, J. Melnychak, Dymianiv, interviews).

> In memory I go back to when I was six, seven years old, on the homestead, in 1903-04. We were close neighbors with another family, where were more children than in ours. It was joyful and interesting to hear our young (then) mothers recall Easter egg making time in the Old Country. We all listened, keeping close to our mothers, being ever ready to bring something to them, or to take something away. (1969: 28)[27]

Like in the Old Country, commissioning practiced pysanka writers to write Easter eggs was not uncommon among early settlers. Sofia Porayko-Kyforuk continues:

> With the coming of spring and Easter, there would grip such Easter fever, that even at one time, in 1909-10, our not too distant neighbor begged my mother to send me to her home to enscribe Easter eggs. I was happy to go.
>
> One beautiful April morning [I] gathered together all the Easter egg making needs – a "k[y]stka," wax (candle) in an enamelled cup, and so on to N(ikolai – O.H.) Melnyk's, a mile and a half away. Snow had half melted, so the road was muddy, but there was a way of avoiding it by going along the wet prairie on either side of the road (for these were not graded then as yet – O.H.). Mrs. Melnyk was a round-faced, respectful housewife. There were six children at home, two daughters already married.
>
> I was seated near the stove so the wax could be kept warm and in a liquid form, and [i] somehow enscribed. They allowed me to trace anything I liked…[28]
>
> Their boys, then my age, peeped around the door, joking and running away past the house. And Mrs. Melnyk said: "A fool even God forgives." While the day was so lovely, springtime one, that it simply begged one to go outdoors, to run around. But I was assigned a responsibility, so carried it out. (1969: 30-31)[29]

---

[27] S. Porayko-Kyforuk's memoirs are translated from Ukrainian by her daughter Octavia Hall.

U pamiaty vertaiusia do 6-7 rokiv (svoho zhyttia – O.H.) na farmi, 1903-04. U blyz'kim susidstvi z druhoiu rodynoiu, de bulo bil'she dityi iak u nas, i usim bulo radisno tsikavo iak nashi molodi tohdi materi upovidaly pro pysankovyi chas u Starim Kraiu. My vsi tohdi slukhniani trymalysia blyz'ko materiv, hotovi pobihchy prynesty, vidnesty.

[28] See the designs Sofia Porayko-Kyforuk used to write at that time in Chapter 5 since they fit more into the Individualistic paradigm of the pysanka. See her mother's designs in the following subchapter "Form and Design."

[29] *Z prykhodom vesny i Velykodnia buvala pysankova horiachka shcho navit' odnoho razu, 1909-10, nasha nedaleka susida poprosyla moiu mamu shchob vyslala mene do nei napysaty pysanok. Ia rado! Odnoho harnoho kvitnevoho ranku zibrala pysanchars'ki prybory – kystku i visk (svichkovyi) u horniaty polyvanim, i do N. Melnyka odnu i polovynu myli. Snih napolovynu stanuv, doroha bolotysta, ale bulo kudy obmynaty vohkoiu preroiu. Melnychka bula kruhlolytsia, povazhna hospodynia. Dityi bulo shestyro vdoma, dvi vzhe viddani.*

Posadyly mene kolo kukhni shchob visk buv teplyi u plynim stani, i iakos' ia pysala. Daly meni na voliu shchob pysaty shcho sama liubliu...

Ikh hloptsi tohdi moieho viku kukaly kriz' dveri, zhartuiuchy ta vtikaiuchy poza khatu. A Melnychka kazala "durnomu i Boh prostyt." A den' vesnianyi harnyi azh prosyt' pobihty po dvori. Ale mene postavleno u vidvichal'ne mistse tak i vykonuvala.

Joanna Janis showed the continuity of the Old Country religious and spiritual worldview in regards to pysanky within her family in the 1910s-1930s. On a farm, they wrote Easter eggs on Holy Thursday, like they used to do in the Old Country. The process of writing and transmission of this knowledge was very intimate in their family. Janis shared a prayer, taught by her mother, to be said each year before starting to write:

> …We asked God to bless not only our work but the work that we did would be a blessing to us throughout the whole year and would bring good luck, and prosperity and health…At that time… it was sort of ingrained in us that if you didn't do it, you might have a very bad year... At the time, when I was doing it with my mother, I sincerely believe that…I should learn to do it because it would bring me good things in life.

2.1.2. *Form and Design*

The pysanka patterns and motifs in the Old Country paradigm were remembered from the writers' home villages. As pointed out in the previous chapter, most people knew only the tradition of their own village or vicinity, since peasants did not typically travel often. The designs, originating in various localities in Ukraine, were used for a generation by Ukrainians in Canadian rural communities (characterized for a time by even greater isolation, due to larger geographical distances on the Canadian prairies than in the Old Country). Early Ukrainian Canadian pysanky are characterized by the Old Country regional specificities, in terms of motifs and color palette. For example, Joanna Janis's mother wrote pysanky as she remembered them from the village of Bortykivtsi in the Ternopil' region. The motifs of her pysanky were mostly geometric designs: "*Chetver*" [Thursday], "*Piatnytsia*" [Friday], "*Velykden'* " [Easter], "*Pasochka*" [Small Easter Bread] "*Kuriacha lapka*" [Chicken Foot] "*Sorok klyntsiv*" [forty triangles]. They were written in two colors: white elements were situated on a black background.

According to I. Hurhula, such motifs in terms of designs and color palette were typical for the ethnographic territory of Podillia, where Bortykivtsi belonged (Hurhula 1929: 133; 139).

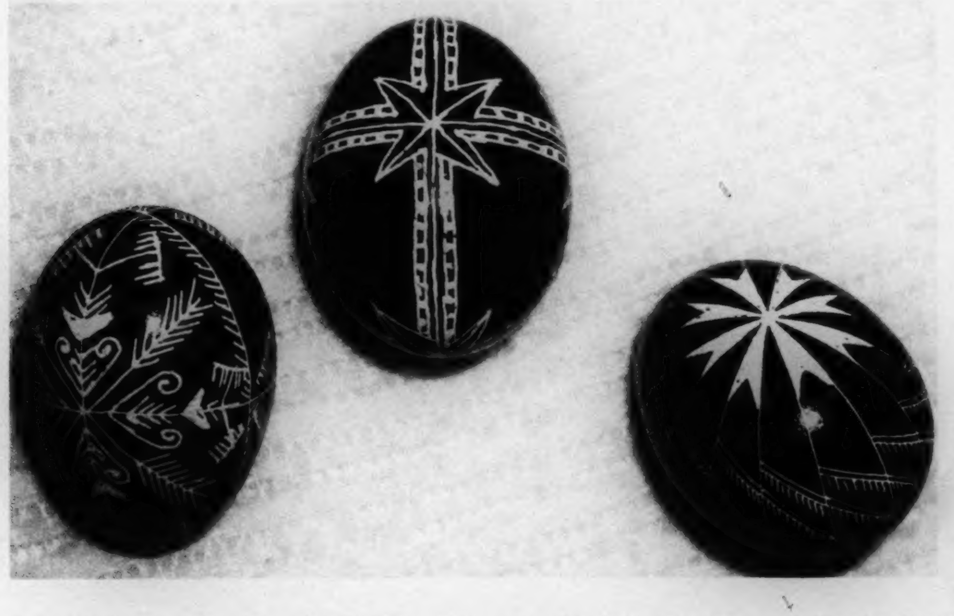

Figure 8. Pysanky reproduced by J. Janis as remembered from her mother, writing in the 1920-1930s (Janis' private collection). Unless otherwise indicated, photographs from private collections were taken by M. Lesiv.

From current emic perspective, the Old Country pysanky are defined as "*starokraiovi*" [from the Old Country] or "*davni*" [old]. Sofia Porayko-Kyforuk sketched her mother's designs written in the early years of the 20th century. Comparing these designs with those documented in different ethnographic regions in Ukraine by scholars, we can trace their connection with the territory of Bukovyna.

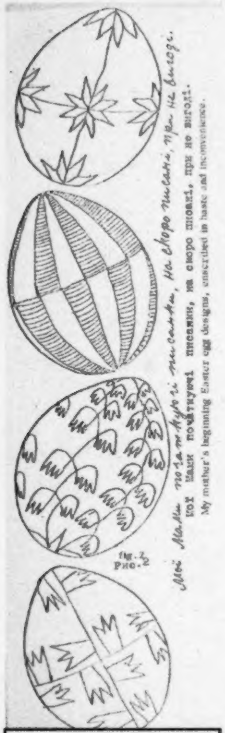
Мої Мами початкуючі писанки, на скоро писані, при не вигоді.
Мої Мами початкуючі писанки, на скоро писані, при не вигоді.
My mother's beginning Easter egg designs, executed in haste and inconvenience.
fig.2
Рис.2

Figure 9. S. Porayko-Kyforuk's mother's initial pysanka designs (early 1900s), sketched by Porayko-Kyforuk (1969: 20).

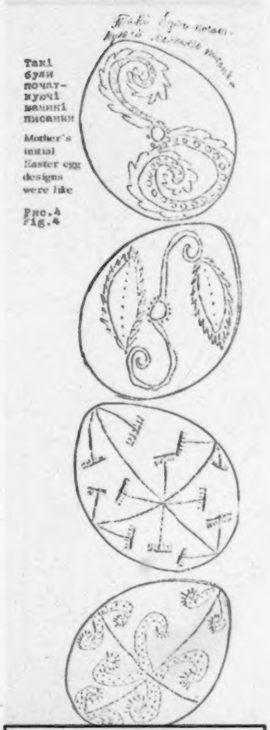
Такі були початкуючі мамині писанки
Mother's initial Easter egg designs were like
Рис.4
Fig.4

Figure 10. S. Porayko-Kyforuk's mother's pysanka designs from the early 1900s, sketched by Porayko-Kyforuk (1969: 21).

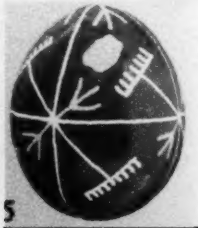

Figure 11. Pysanka, Bukovyna region (Elyjiw 1994: Fig. 36).

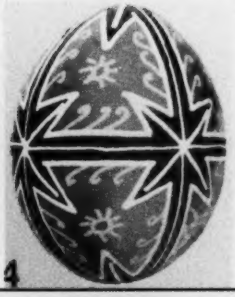

Figure 12. Pysanka "*Pasochka* [Small Easterbread]," Bukovyna region (Z. Elyjiw 1994: Fig. 12).

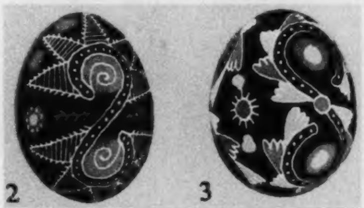

Figure 13. Pysanky. Bukovyna region (Elyjiw 1994: Fig. 36).

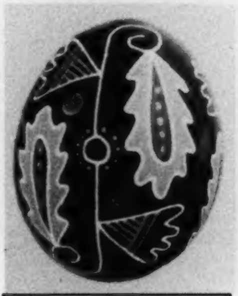

Figure 14. Pysanka. Bukovyna region (Elyjiw 1994: Fig. 34).

Interestingly, some of Sofia Stefaniuk's designs likely originated in Galicia, while others seem to represent the Vinnytsia region, as documented in published sources. Such a phenomenon could be the result of communication and interaction among people, who came from different ethnographic regions of Ukraine and settled in the same area in Canada. Exchanging the motifs remembered from their home villages and making them communal in Canada, people formed regional Ukrainian Canadian pysanka traditions in terms of designs.[30]

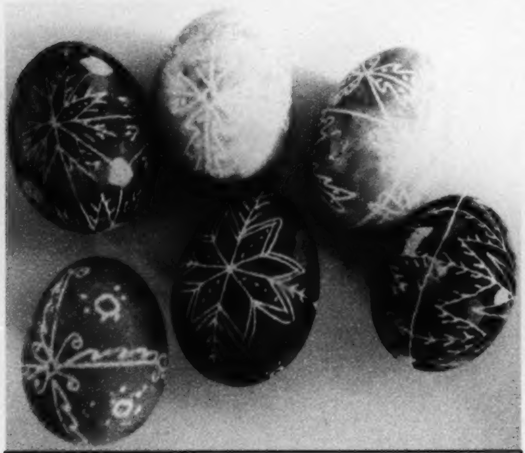

Figure 15. Pysanky written by S. Stefaniuk on her farm in Saskatchewan in the 1950s.

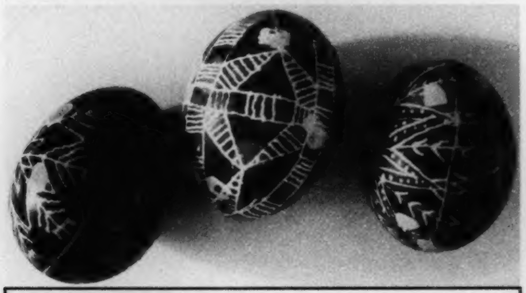

Figure 16. Pysanky of S. Stefaniuk, 1950s.

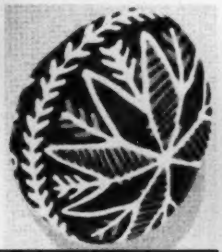

Figure 17. Pysanka. Vinnytsia region (Butnik-Sivers'kyi 1967: Fig.49).

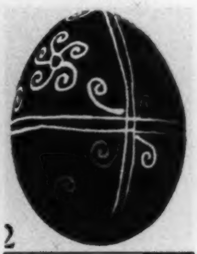

Figure 18. Pysanka. Galicia (Elyjiw 1994: Fig. 13).

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[30] However, Sophia Stefaniuk's pysanky may not be a pure example of the phenomenon discussed. Since they were written in the 1950s, these designs might have been taken from the published sources presented by the National/Ethnic paradigm as discussed in Chapter 3. I was not able to find Easter eggs from an earlier time period, neither in the three museums in Edmonton I have explored, nor in private collections. Pysanky are highly fragile objects. Furthermore, in the early decades of the 20th century, they were usually not kept for a long time after Easter, as discussed in the following subchapter.

Looking at the Old Country pysanky from the "art critic" point of view, one can easily notice that one egg includes a relatively small number of motifs, which are quite large. Applied with the help of homemade stylus, the lines are fairly thick. The quality of the lines reflects challenges of writing on a hard-curved surface of the eggshell.[31] (The discussion of these pysanky will be extended in the next chapter, where they will be compared with the National/Ethnic Easter eggs).

2.1.3. *Production methods*

The information gained from the participants of this study corroborated Klymasz's findings that easily accessible and homemade materials were used for writing pysanky by the first settlers (Klymasz 1969:3). The production process was fairly simple. Like in the Old Country, the first pysanky in Canada were written mostly on chicken eggs – those that were available on a farm. However, duck, goose and even turkey eggs were also used in come cases. Sofia Porayko-Kyforuk remembers one detail from her writing at Mrs. Melnyk's place (described above):

> It surprised me then that Mrs. Melnyk gave me to enscribe a goose egg – large, white, fresh – because goose eggs are dear [expensive]. A goose lays few eggs, only about a dozen during the laying season, nor are all of these fertile. These are saved (for hatching under – O. H.) the clucking hens. I remember with what fear and reverence I traced upon it designs of ordinary branches of leaves. (1969:19, 31)[32]

---

[31] While Sophia Stefaniuk wrote the pysanky presented in figures 15 and 16 at an older age, Joanna Janis's pysanky (fig. 8) were written in the early stages of her writing.

[32] *Dyvuvalo mene tohdi shcho tta hospodynia Melnychka dala meni vypysaty husiachy iaitse – velyky, bily, svizhe – bo husiachi iaitsi dorohi. Huska malo iaiets' nese, lyshe z 12 na ii nesuchyi syzon, i to ne vsi dobri. Ikh shchadiat pid kvochky. Pamiataiu iak z strakhom i sviatochnesteiu pysala na nim zvychaini haluzky.*

Styluses were made out of wooden sticks and metal cans or tabs from the back of calendars available at the local store.

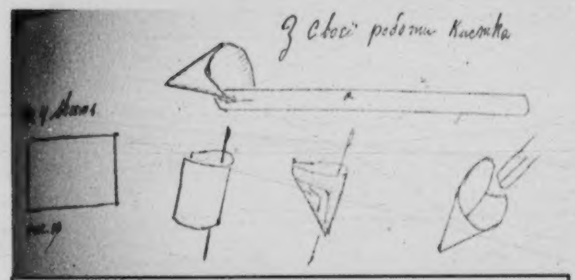

Figure 19. Homemade stylus sketched by S. Porayko-Kyforuk as remembered from the early 1900s (1969: 8).

Some respondents remembered their mothers and/or grandmothers making dyes from natural sources, such as onion skins (for yellow and orange), beetroots, short buttercups (for yellowish green) and "some other kinds of plants" that were boiled, producing different colors.[33]

Although bees-wax was available through pharmacies, Sofia Porayko-Kyforuk recalls (about 1903-1904):

> In the beginnings we used candle wax and "parawax" (used in canning – O.H.), which was not as good as, because it is soft and brittle, sometimes crumbling off an enscribed egg. Beeswax is hard and flows well when soft, grips the egg like spruce-gum, which is good. Then it was available in the pharmacy. But for [us], it was not considered necessary to go to these lengths (of getting good wax – O.H.), the more so because candle wax could be substituted (1969: 30).

One of the marked innovations introduced into pysanka writing in the first decades of the 20th century was the use of commercially produced crepe paper in different colors. To make dyes, the crepe paper was soaked in very hot water until the water absorbed the color. With crepe paper, the palette of colors changed in terms of variety and saturation. A larger number of colors of much more intense shades became available. For example, pysanky in some of Sofia Stefaniuk's pysanky in particular shades of violet and green, presented in the previous subchapter, suggest that these dyes were not made out of natural sources.[34]

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[33] Since a long time has passed since those days, and due to the fact that those kinds of dyes have been completely replaced by synthetic commercial dyes, the respondents do not remember exactly what other kinds of plants were used.

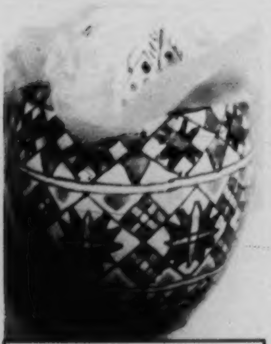

Figure 20. Pysanka made with ink and paints, 1960s (UCWLC museum collection)

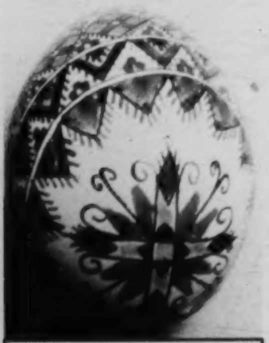

Figure 21. Pysanka made with ink and paints, 1960s (UCWLC museum collection)

Although not widely popular, another innovation that was introduced into the pysanka writing in the Old Country paradigm also dealt with new commercial materials such as indelible pens and ink. Two pysanky from the collection of UCWLC Alberta Branch Museum in Edmonton, which were acquired by the museum in 1960s, resemble the Old country designs from Hutsul region (western Ukraine), with geometric motifs completely covering the surface and the use of bright yellow, orange, red and green colors. However, these pysanky are painted with paints rather than written in a wax-resist technique. The basic lines dividing the eggs into small surfaces are applied with ink, and appear black instead of white. The areas between the lines are further filled with "paints of some kind."[35]

The early Ukrainian Canadian pysanky were most often written on raw eggs. Their contents remained intact for quite a long time. Eventually, if the pysanka survived, it dried out so that a shriveled yolk remained to roll around inside. Sometimes, Easter eggs were written on hard boiled eggs, depending on their subsequent function, discussed in the next subchapter.

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[34] In this case, it is hard to determine whether these dyes were made out from crepe paper or the synthetic commercial dyes, which were widely available by the 1950s.

[35] The collection of this museum was shown and described to me by Nadya Cyncar. However, she did not know exactly what kind of paints used for these pysanky. Anne Lastuka, remembering her mother writing pysanky back in the early 1900s, described a similar kind of technique.

2.1.4. *Function*.

According to the respondents' recollections, the function of pysanky in the early decades of the 20th century remained the same in the Ukrainian communities in Canada as it had been back in the Old country. The functions demonstrated Old Country regional particularities, similar to the pattern we found for designs.

All the interviewees pointed out that Easter eggs were written predominantly for religious and ritual purposes – to be blessed in a church along with Easter food, as well as to be exchanged as gifts among relatives, friends and neighbors after Easter service. Furthermore, some of them shared their memories about other rituals connected with the pysanka, brought to Canada from certain areas of Ukraine, where they were previously performed. For example, Anna Zwozdesky, discussing the area of Sheho, Saskatchewan, described the Bukovynian tradition of giving pysanky away in commemoration of deceased loved ones:

> …This is our [Bukovynian – A.Z.] tradition to give *pysanky* away for the deceased. For example, if I want to give one away, I would say: "Take this *pysanka* in commemoration of [my] mother." I remember when I was young, one lady gave me such a dark red *pysanka* saying: "Oh, my [deceased daughter] Katerynka, she looked like you, this *pysanka* is for you in commemoration of Katerynka, and you say a prayer for her." She gave me such a nice, dark red *pysanka*. I remember that so clearly because when something like that happens to you as a child, it sticks to your mind. So, it was being given "from one's hands." On an Easter day, even in a church after having the *paska* (Easter bread) blessed, one might want to give "from one's hands," as we say.[36]

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[36] *...Tradytsia nasha* [bukovyns'ka – A.Z.] *sho na Velykden' daiut pysanky... za pomershykh..., naprymir iak by ia khotila daty: " Na, bery pysanku, tse v pamiat'* [moiei] *mamy." Ia znaiu iak ia malen'ka bula meni odna zhinka dala taku vyshnevu pysanku, kazhe: "A, to moia [pokiina dochka] Katerynka bula taka iak ty, tse bude tobi pysanka za Katerynku,ty skazhy molytvu za nei." Taku vyshnevu, harnu pysanku, ia tak*

Some interviewees also recollected the Old Country ritual of *vlyvannia* (sprinkling water) in early Ukrainian-Canadian communities. This ritual is described by early Ukrainian ethnographers and was practiced in many ethnographic regions with some regional particularities (Korduba 179; Sumtsov 201-2; Kul'zhynskii 66-7). *Vlyvannia* consisted of sprinkling water onto a person's head three times and saying "*Khrystos Voskres*!" [Christ is Risen!], on Easter Monday. This was performed by the young men in the community who expected pysanky from the girls for such a blessing. If the girls were to show obvious rejection of this ritual, they would be soaked with a pail full of water. Though done in good fun, the girls would often find the consequences not very humorous. Anna Zwozdesky mentioned that *vlyvannia* was actively practiced among the Bukovynian Ukrainians in her area. Johanna Janis shared her memoirs about the same ritual practiced in the area of Norquay, Saskatchewan.

Esther Mosychuk, describing the area of Two Hills, Alberta, in the 1930s, remembers a ritual connected with *krashanky* that her mother used to perform. Every Easter Sunday morning, they would put a dime and *krashanka* (or pysanka) into a container with water and would wash their faces with that water. According to earlier ethnographers' findings, this ritual was known in some areas of Ukraine, and was connected with the belief in the pysanka and/or *krashanka* as the talisman of beauty, strength and health: a face washed with this water will be beautiful and healthy (Korduba 180; Sumtsov 203).

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bachu te vse, bo ty iak mala a shos take stanet'sia to vono trymaiet'sia kolo tebe. Otzhe, to davaly "z ruk." To daiut perepichku i pysanku za kohos' shoby zhadaty. Na Velykden', navit' u tserkvi iak posviatyly pasky, ta khtos' hoche daty "z ruk," my kazhemo.

In the area of Desjarlais, Alberta, the ritual of sharing Easter dinner with the deceased family members existed at least until the 1970s among the Ukrainian pioneers and their descendents. For this meal, the food was brought to the graves along with pysanky after church service on Easter Sunday (Klymasz 1976). Such a tradition has also been documented in many ethnographic regions in Ukraine (Korduba 179; Sumtsov 205; Kul'zhynskii 70).

Maureen Stefaniuk remembers her grandmother practicing a ritual until the 1950s on a farm, within which the pysanka was believed to influence the good fertility of the land:

> …I remember this really vividly because it was a puzzle to me. I remember in summertime I was at her place and she had a garden and she had a whole line of crab apple trees in her garden…And the first two or three trees…were beside a caragana hedge that was in front of her house…I remember seeing in front of the very first tree, one summer afternoon, there was silver jar that you usually make preserves or pickles in, and there were pysanky in this jar. It looked like they were thrown out because they were outside…so, I took one…and I thought this is my chance to see what was inside…and I remember her being…upset…so, ever since then I wondered what these pysanky were doing underneath the crab apple trees…

According to several respondents, pysanky in their homes were written on boiled eggs, they were eaten on Easter. Also, most of the participants of this study mentioned that Old Country pysanky were not preserved for a long time. "Eventually after they are all done, you just peel them and eat them, because they wouldn't last anyhow," said Anna Lastuka, in whose family pysanky were written on boiled eggs. Evan Gushul shares his memories:

> The thing is that the eggs were boiled and each one of us got an egg. This was, I guess, a part of ceremony in a way, and [we] would take the shell off and the shell would just disappear and that's all. We never saved [a single] egg.

Myron Shewchuk remembers feeding chickens with pysanka shells in his family on a farm in the 1930s.

2.1.5. *Meaning*

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the meaning of the Old County pysanka was originally closely related to its function. Pysanky rituals were performed because they were meaningful. For example, Easter eggs were buried in the ground to influence a good harvest, an Easter egg was put into the wash water to make one's face beautiful and healthy, or pysanky were written to bring good luck, prosperity and health. In addition, three interviewees remembered their grandmothers believing in pysanky as objects which supported with life on earth: life will continue as long as people will be writing Easter eggs. As a result, these women strongly encouraged their granddaughters to keep writing pysanky, because ceasing the tradition will immediately lead to "the end of the world" (Zwozdesky, Janis, Spivak-Steele, interviews).

However, there is some indication that the meaning of the pysanka rituals in the Old Country paradigm in Canada was not always fully explicit. In most cases, respondents demonstrated the retention of rituals, but less awareness of the meaning behind them, responding to questions about meaning simply with: "My mother told me that it was what everybody did at Easter in the Old Country," or "well, it was nice" (Lacusta, interview).

In those families, where the old magical meaning behind certain rituals was lost, pysanka writing was still sometimes practiced as part of a customary lifestyle. In these cases, the focus shifted to a social meaning, which could also be very important. The pysanka was tightly incorporated into social interaction within the family and community. Exchanging pysanky as gifts after Easter service or practicing the ritual of *vlyvannia* undoubtedly contributed to building a sense of community. In addition, pysanky were apparently the objects of aesthetic appreciation in the context of spring and Easter celebration.

2.2. The Old Country Pysanka: *Etic* Interpretations

The Old Country pysanka clearly corresponds to the category of "folk art," as defined in scholarship. Before focusing on the Old Country Easter egg as "folk art," let us highlight the key points that characterize a certain artistic phenomenon as "folk." Henry Glassie, defining folk art in the art world, considers it to be "more collective than personal" ("more social than individualistic") and "more sacred than secular" (1986: 271; 273). Glassie underlines the aptitude of folk art to "center through abstraction upon the spiritual universe," "carry[ing] the social message" and "hold[ing] to the tradition" (1986: 271). In addition, this author emphasizes folk creativity to be the result of "amateur inspiration" rather than "professional education" (1986: 272). Robert Klymasz enlarges the list of the characteristic features of folk art by identifying such factors as the unconscious retention of the tradition and the informal oral transmission of it, while talking about specifically Ukrainian Canadian folk creativity in pioneer times:

> …for some time the Ukrainian pioneer settlement retained, unconsciously, …[a] centuries-old agrarian way of life. It represented the ideal model of a folk culture, one that relies almost exclusively on traditional oral means to transmit its heritage. (1972: 7)

The Old Country pysanka clearly fits each of these characteristics: the tendency to be collective, sacred, amateur, unconsciously retained and transmitted orally and informally in the context of a custom.

Although from the perspective of the creator, any work she does is considered as her individual creation, from the *etic* perspective, the Old Country pysanka remains a collective rather than individual form of creative expression in terms of general knowledge and practices. The origins of the particular designs, as well as the roots of the functions of the pysanka can neither be exactly determined nor associated with any particular individuals. The pysanka motifs were mostly communal and the specific functions of the pysanka were performed by many people. Easter egg activities practiced at that period of time were the result of collective experiences gradually accumulated into the knowledge brought from the Old Country and passed on to the subsequent generations in Canada, unconsciously "holding to the tradition." In this respect, the Old Country pysanka culture was informally inherited: the descendants of Ukrainian pioneers received their knowledge about it directly from elder family/community members, transmitting it on through generations within the same family (or community) in the context of their customary lifestyle.

As illustrated above, the pysanka of the Old Country paradigm retained certain remnants of traditional magical beliefs reflecting the peasants' old worldview, such as the perception of the pysanka as the keeper of life on earth, the harbinger of good luck, prosperity and health. These remnants demonstrate that the Old Country pysanka, in some families, still "represent[ed] the invisible by means of the visible" (Eliade 55). Mircea Eliade considers such representation to be one of the characteristic features of sacred art which "translate[s] religious experience and a metaphysical conception of the world and of human existence into a concrete, representational form" (55). Within the pysanka tradition, such "religious experience" and a "metaphysical conception" were accumulated in the form of an egg covered with certain designs, carrying what Glassie calls "the social message" and communicating "abstraction upon the spiritual universe."

Whereas the pysanka of the Old Country paradigm is clearly well laden with social and spiritual significance, its connection with the narrower western definition of aesthetics is weaker. From the pysanka writers' perspectives, the activity was not primarily to make a physically beautiful object. Anderson's definition of aesthetics is broader than many western definitions, and he includes an *Instrumental* aesthetic perspective, in which the expressive activity serves as an instrument to "pave the way to a world that is socially…[and] spiritually better" (2004 [1990]: 240). Although this aesthetic criterion is relevant to the pysanka discussed, Anderson's description of western aesthetic theories seems least applicable to the Old Country tradition, which evolved a cultural context that was not entirely "western." In contrast to this, in the following chapters we will see that as soon as the pysanka became transferred into the western cultural context, it started clearly accumulating and reflecting western criteria of aesthetics.

Chapter 3

3.1. The Pysanka of the National/Ethnic Paradigm

As the name of this paradigm suggests, the development of the pysanka within this pattern is tightly connected with nationalist politics. To be able to understand this connection better, let us focus briefly on the Ukrainian-Canadian political context that served as a background.

A nationalist outlook started developing in Ukraine very actively in the second part of the 19th century among the intelligentsia. Although it started reaching peasant rural communities at the same time, its expansion within the latter was not very rapid.[37] As a result, many peasants arriving to Canada in the first wave of immigration were not nationally conscious.

A nationalist outlook started developing in western Canada with the help of some representatives of Ukrainian intelligentsia after 1905 (Martynovych 1991: 244-247).[38] This outlook was reinforced in the interwar period by the "second wave of immigration," which included many politically conscious people of the intelligentsia escaping from the political unrest in Europe.[39] In Canada, these immigrants, joined by some descendents of the earlier Ukrainian settlers, put a concerted effort into building their distinctive national/ethnic identity. For this purpose, a great number of Ukrainian institutions were established (Yuzyk 1953: 80-112; Martynovych 1991: 265-305).

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[37] For a detailed discussion of the national consciousness awaking in the rural communities of Galicia among peasants see J.P. Himka's *Galician Villagers and the Ukrainian National Movement in the Nineteenth Century* (59-104; 143-215).

[38] Most territories of Ukraine from the late 18th to the early 20th centuries were colonized by the Russian and Austro-Hungarian Empires. Colonization was a factor enhancing nationalist outlook significantly. For a detailed discussion of a history of Ukraine of this period see Orest Subtelny's *Ukraine : A History* (1988:201-20).

[39] The Russian empire collapsed under the impact of the First World War. The eastern and central Ukraine was now occupied by the Soviet regime while western territories belonged to Poland, Romania and Czechoslovakia (Subtelny 380-452).

Many Ukrainian-Canadian periodicals of those times now serve as illustrations of the Ukrainian political spirit and its manifestation in Canada in the first half of the 20th century. In many cases, they developed in close connection with growth and intensification of Ukrainian national consciousness in Ukraine. A number of articles appearing at that time dealt with the issues of raising such consciousness among Ukrainian Canadians. These issues were reflected in anthropological and sociological pieces focusing on the Ukrainian people as a separate nation.[40] These works carried the principle political message: the Ukrainian people are a distinctive nation and Ukraine should be a sovereign state. In such a context, the cultural heritage of Ukrainians attracted increasing attention. Within articles on cultural topics were powerful appeals for the necessity of preserving the Ukrainian cultural heritage and maintaining it in Canada, where writers perceived a danger of losing it.[41] Simultaneously, this heritage was an effective auxiliary instrument helping in the process of building a distinctive Ukrainian national/ethnic identity. Various forms of cultural expression of Ukrainian pioneers became a matter of pride for their descendents. They were transformed from their original peasant context and made into symbols representing Ukrainians in Canada. One widely recognized example of such an approach is Vasyl' Avramenko's activity in Canada, beginning with his arrival in 1925. Avramenko is a well-known cultural activist in Ukrainian dance on this continent.[42] His artistically-inspired staged Ukrainian dance performances in North America were constantly accompanied by very patriotic speeches.[43]

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[40] For example, in his research on Khvedir Vovk, Dr. Z. Kuzelia discusses the scholarly activity of Vovk and his contribution to the field of anthropology emphasizing the researcher's conclusions about Ukrainians as a unique anthropological type (1920). Another example is "*Deshcho pro ukrains'kyi narid. Uryvok z pochatkovoi geografii St. Rudnyts'koho.*" [A Little About the Ukrainian People. A Passage from S. Rudnyts'kyi's Elementary Geography] (1925). See also Dr. I. Rakovs'kyi's article "*Rasovist' Ukraintsiv*" [Race of Ukrainians] (1926) and Ia. Okunevs'kyi's article "*Ukraintsi iak natsia*" [Ukrainians as a nation] (1931).

[41] "*Znachinie narodnykh zvychaiv*" [The Singificance of Folk Customs] (1918).

Pride in the achievements of Ukraine's folk culture often resulted in hyperbolic statements such as "there are no other people in the world that would know how to sing so many beautiful and valuable songs as those that our Ukrainian people have," or "Ukrainian songs are the best in the world" (Doroshchuk 1924).

The nationalist outlook in Canada was greatly enhanced by the Ukrainian political refugees that arrived in this country after World War II, known as the "third wave of immigration." Soviet totalitarian oppression in Ukraine was an impulse for intensive cultural activities in Canada under the appeals "Let's always remember what our native land expects from us" (Zaiatseva 1957). They contributed much to building the Ukrainian national/ethnic identity in Canada with the help of the pre-existing representations of Ukrainian cultural heritage. Robert Klymasz emphasizes the key points characterizing this wave of immigrants:

> For most of them Canada's attraction was as a political refuge rather than for homesteading. Educated, elitist, urban and above all nationalistic in outlook, the new Ukrainian Canadians were conscious of a mission to preserve and foster their heritage and traditions in exile until political conditions improved in the Ukraine. (1972: 8)

Now let us approach the pysanka phenomenon in the context of the National/Ethnic paradigm. Articles about Ukrainian Easter seem to be popular on the pages of the periodicals from the first half of the 20th century, starting in its first decades. These publications were often accompanied by a metaphorical comparison of Christ's Resurrection with both the revival of nature in springtime as well as the political resurrection of Ukraine. Nationalistically oriented Ukrainian Canadians desired and hoped for the idea of freedom and independence to come true along with Ukraine's resurrection.[44] Their metaphorical comparison of the victory of true Ukraine over the falsehood of its oppressors with the victory of life over death (resurrection) was a recurrent theme in women's periodicals up to the early 1990s, when Ukrainian Independence was declared.[45] "*Khrystos Voskres, Voskresne Ukraina*" [Christ is Risen, Ukraine Shall Rise!] was a common greeting used by the Ukrainian patriots over the years.

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[42] For the discussion of conceptual issues of Avramenko's activity in Ukrainian dance within the paradigm of National culture, see A. Nahachewsky's "Avramenko and the Paradigm of National culture" (2003). See also O. Martynowych's "All That Jazz!" The Avramenko Phenomenon in Canada, 1925-1929"(2003) for historical observation of Avramenko's activity.

[43] See, for example, "*Ukrains'kyi natsional'nyi tanok. Promova V. Avramenka v Tovarystvi im. T. Shevchenka u Vinnipegu dnia 21 lystopada 1926 roku.*" [Ukrainian national dance: V. Avramenko's speech at the T. Shevchenko Society in Winnipeg on November 21, 1926]" (1929).

Concerned about the defacement of Ukrainian material culture (including pysanky) in Ukraine, caused by the ruling foreign regimes, nationalistically-oriented organizations felt obliged to preserve Ukrainian traditions in a free world.[46] Among their primarily goals regarding the pysanka were to bring up nationally-conscious Ukrainian youth, as well as to introduce and popularize this part of Ukrainian heritage among non-Ukrainians in Canada. These concerns sparked a very quick development of structured activities involving pysanky, starting in the 1920s (Kohuska 61).

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[44] See, for example, "Velykden'" [Easter] in *Kameniari* (1919).
[45] For a concrete example, see Ihor Bodnaruk's "*Radist' Velykodnia*" [Joy of Easter] (1983).
[46] During the Soviet period, many kinds of folk art had been used as tools for fulfilling political purposes. O. Solomchenko pointed out the appearance of new motifs, such as a hammer and sickle, the five-point star on pysanky with the establishment of the Soviet regime in the Hutsul region (Solomchenko 1964: 61).

Now let us trace the transformation of the pysanka within the National/Ethnic paradigm in terms of transmission, form and design, production, function and meaning.

3.1.1.*Transmission*

At the beginning, gender roles in pysanka writing remained similar to those of the Old Country paradigm. The Old Country Easter egg had long been associated with peasant women, and the National/Ethnic pysanka developed specifically in the context of Ukrainian Canadian women's organizations. Gradually, men became somewhat more involved in National/Ethnic pysanka activities.

The social shift can be traced in the new paradigm much more clearly than the gender one. Peasant cultural symbols were introduced to new social, political and economic circumstances. As Frances Swyripa points out, women's organizations "rejected 'peasantness' as a way of life," but promoted "Ukrainianness," "drawing on the peasants' folk art" and further politicizing it (1993: 158).

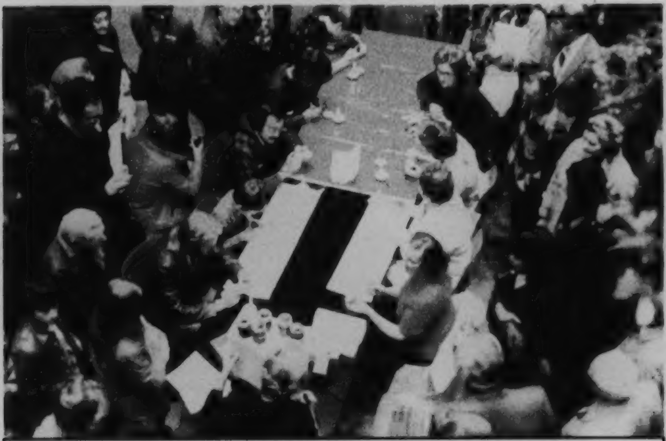

Figure 22. Public demonstration of pysanka writing by N. Faryna, 1970s (Faryna, "Pysanka." Srapbook).

In contrast to the Old Country pysanka, transmitted orally, informally, and intimately through generations within a family or community,

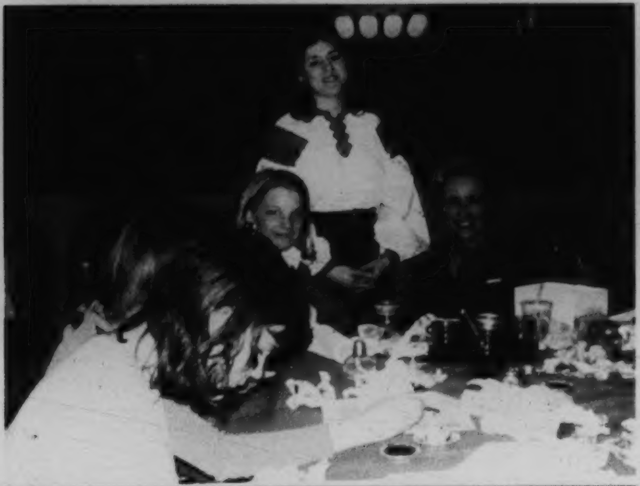

Figure 23. Pysanka course conducted by N. Faryna, 1976 (Faryna, "Pysanka." Scrapbook).

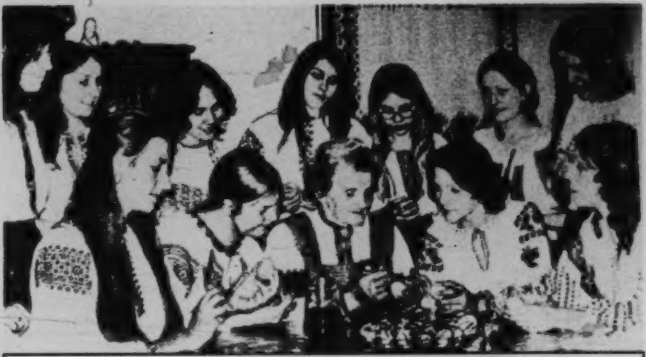

Figure 24. H. Martyniuk conducting pysanka course for young girls. Windsor, Ontario, 1972 (*Zhinochyi svit* August 1972: 21).

in the context of the National/Ethnic paradigm, knowledge about the Easter egg became acquired formally – via published sources, as well as through very structured teaching/learning activities of various forms (pysanka courses, workshops and public demonstrations). They all were the result of a great effort put into popularization of this phenomenon by the women's organizations as well as by particular individuals dedicated to this cause.

Educational and instructional materials about the pysanka such as postcards, handbooks, articles and books have been very popular among Ukrainian Canadians and have been common in people's homes since the late 1920s. These publications focus on the pysanka from a variety of perspectives. In a popular, reader-friendly style, they cover such topics as the origin of pysanky, the beliefs connected with them, the profound symbolism of their motifs, the customs associated with writing Easter eggs (e.g. saying prayers and incantations), the old way of making dyes, step-by-step production procedures, and more. Furthermore, they constantly provided a variety of pysanka designs. To say that published sources of this character had a great influence on pysanka writing in Canada would not be an exaggeration.

One of the first sources on the pysanka that became widely available were postcards with colored images of Easter eggs.[47] The earliest post cards (from 1929) with instructional notes were developed and distributed in Canada by the UWAC, "significantly influenc[ing] the improvement of the pysanka and its art" (Kohuska 73).[48] In the 1960s and 1970s, many postcards sets published by American companies and the Vegreville Floral Boutique reached Canadian homes.[49]

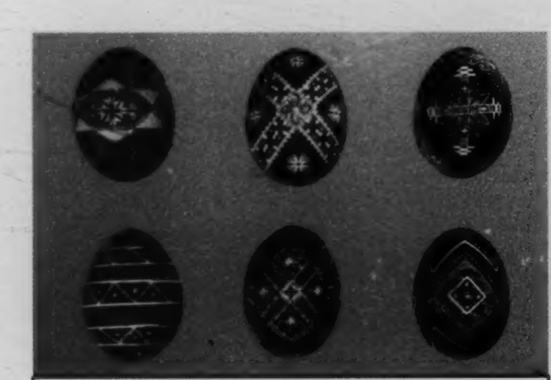

Figure 25. Post Card. New York: Surma Book and Music, 1960.

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[47] Esther Mosychuk remembers her mother having a collection of postcards with pysanka designs in Two Hills, Alberta in the late 1930s (Interview with E. Mosychuk).

[48] Reportedly, the first sets of pysanka postcards with Easter egg patterns with instructional notes were prepared by the UWAC's central branch in Saskatoon in 1929 and in 1934. In 1939 an active member of this organization, Rozyna Dragan, prepared another set of postcards accompanied by a theoretical explanation of the cult of the pysanka. In 1946 and 1947 two cards were published with patterns of pysanky belonging to the UWAC Museum and private collection of Anastasia Rudyk. These designs were actively distributed all over Canada via the numerous branches of the UWAC. The newly established branch of the Museum in Winnipeg continued publishing the collection of pysanky in 1950 (Kohuska 63-86).

[49] American post cards are produced mostly by Surma Book and Music Co. in New York, N.Y. and the Ukrainian Gift Shop in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

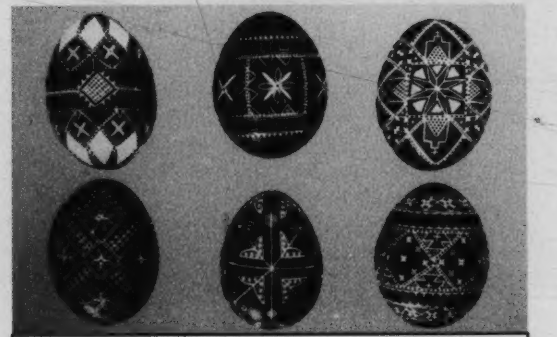

Figure 26. Post Card. New York: Surma Book and Music, 1963.

From the reverse sides of these postcards, one can read the following:

> Pictured here are authentic Ukrainian Easter eggs, (Pysanky). They are miniature masterpieces, hand decorated in an age-old process passed down from mother to daughter…designed with the symbols of Health, Happiness, Prosperity and Love.[50]
>
> Ukrainian Easter Eggs. Delicate Treasures of Art. Traditional symbols of life intricately implanted on the eggs by a process passed down through generations.[51]

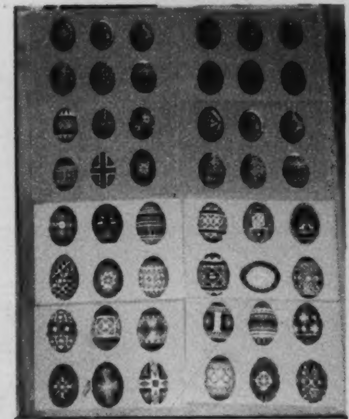

Figure 27. Page of S. Porayko-Kyforuk's "Pysanka Scrapbook" containing a great number of the pysanka post cards.

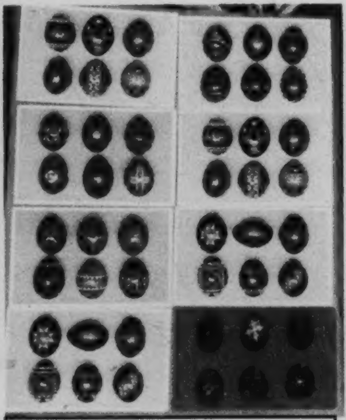

Figure 28. Page of S. Porayko-Kyforuk's "Pysanka Scrapbook" containing a great number of the pysanka post cards.

The following photographs, reproducing two pages of Sofia Porayko-Kyforuk's personal pysanka scrapbook, exemplify their popularity among Ukrainian-Canadians

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[50] Post Card. Surma Book and Music, New York, N.Y., 1960.

[51] M. Procai, L. Perchyshyn, and J. Luciow. Post Card. (Series I – a set of 6 cards). Ukrainian Gift Shop, 217 East Hennepin. Minneapolis, Minn.

(1950s-1980s).

Pysanka handbooks, often compiled by active pysanka writers, also included a number of different designs, as, for example, the one published and distributed by the UWAC in the late 1930s.

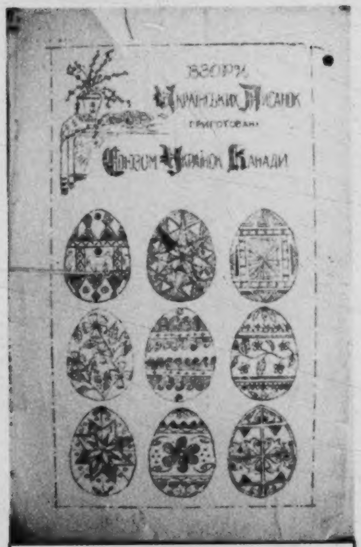

Figure 29. Title page of *Vzory ukrains'kykh pysanok pryhotovani Soiuzom Ukrainok Kanady* [Patterns of Ukrainian pysanky prepared by the Ukrainian Women's Association of Canada], c. 1939.

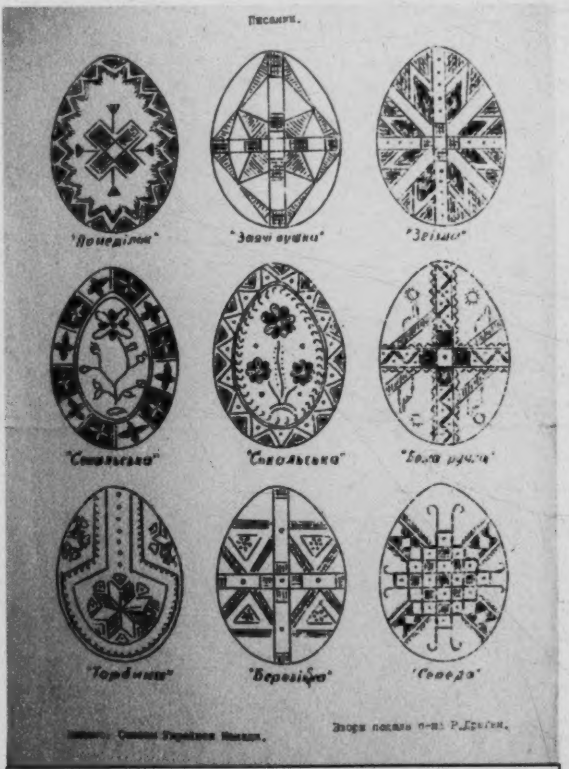

Figure 30. Pysanky "*Ponedilok* [Monday]," "*Zaiachi vushka* [Rabbit's ears]," "*Zvizda* [Star]," "*Sokal'ska* [of Sokal' region]," "*Bozha ruchka* [God's hand]," "*Torbyna* [Bag]," *Berezivs'ka* [of the village of Bereziv]," "*Sereda* [Wednesday]," as presented in *Vzory ukrains'kykh pysanok pryhotovani Soiuzom Ukrainok Kanady*.

From this handbook, one can learn a variety of patterns, several names for specific designs, and the difference between the pysanky of Sokal' and Hutsul regions.

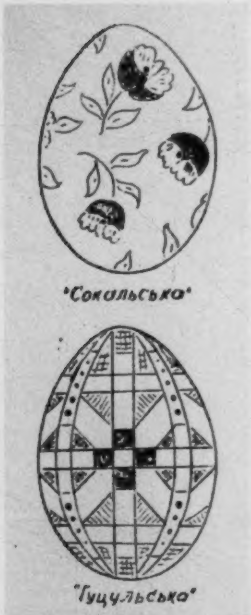

Figure 31. Pysanky "Hutsul's'ka [of Hutsul region]" and "Sokal's'ka [of Sokal' region]" as presented in *Vzory ukrains'kykh pysanok pryhotovani Soiuzom Ukrainok Kanady.*

The focus on the "pre-historic" or "ancient" origin and the "rich symbolism" of the pysanka and its motifs is a dominant recurrent theme of popular publications. Often, the pysanka is introduced in such works with reference to earlier ethnographic scholarship, as in the following passage:

> Our scholars have researched this, our ancient culture, and they explain the meaning of the pysanka and its ornaments to us. They prove that writing pysanky reaches back to a pre-Christian era, when in many people as well as in Ukraine existed the cult of sun, as the provider of life on earth, exactly what those ancient signs-ornaments manifest on pysanky. (Iuzyk 1975: 4)[52]

The influence of the earlier ethnographic sources, interpreting the pysanka as a remnant of ancient sun cults, is obvious. A similar example follows:

> …each sign or drawing on the pysanka had its meaning, talked about something. It was like a letter written with signs…These ancient signs convert a simple egg into a pysanka, because without symbols it would be just a "painted egg," rather than a pysanka. (Koshetz 1951: 2)[53]

This second quote reproduces one of the key arguments of Vadym Shcherbakivs'kyi, who insists that it is not appropriate to look at pysanka signs without looking into their symbolic content (3). Tetiana Koshetz also refers to Shcherbakivs'kyi's work elsewhere in her text.

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[52] However, the author does not indicate any concrete sources in this article.
Nashi naukovtsi doslidyly tsiu nashu starodavniu kul'turu i vony nam vyiasniut' znachennia pysanky ta ii prykras. Vony nam dovodiat', shcho pysannia pysanok siahaie shche v peredkhrystyians'ku dobu, koly v bahatiokh narodiv, i v nas isnuvavav kul't sontsia, iak podavtsia zhyttia na zemli, pro shcho iakraz svidchat' oti starovynni vidznaky-ornamenty na pysankakh.

[53] *…kozhen znak chy maliunok na pysantsi mav svoie znachennia, pro shchos' hovoryv. Tse buv nache lyst napysanyi znakamy…A tsi, vlastyvo, starodavni vidznaky I peretvoriuiut' zvychaine iaitse v pysanku, bo bez tsykh symvoliv to bude prosto "rozmaliovane iaitse," a ne pysanka.*

Pysanka publications in the National/Ethnic paradigm presented an opportunity for further popularization and interpretations of the Easter egg and its motifs in Canada. For example, Maria Iuzyk (1975: 5) writes that "pine-tree" in combination with "sun wheels" means "awakening of nature" (this is exactly how this motif was interpreted by Sumtsov (367)). From the same work, one can also learn that a "triangle" means trinity: flame, water and air; sun, thunder and fire; or husband, wife and child. Kylymnyk had previously discussed the motif "*trynih*" [tripod] (which is different in shape from a triangle) as follows:

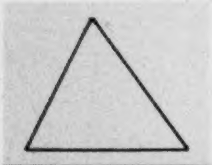

Figure 32. Pysanka motif "Triangle" (Tkachuk, Kishchuk, and Nicholaichuk 23).

> …the "tripod"… has been known from the time of the Trypillian culture,[54] it likely signifies heaven, earth and air, according to some [researchers]; according to others it means air, flame and water; still others consider it a symbol of man's life: birth, life and death; still others – heaven, earth and hell and so on. Of course, to confirm what it means exactly is difficult, especially in our times, in a foreign country. (1962: 193)[55]

The author himself points out the tendency for personal interpretation of motifs among the researchers. This process of interpretation clearly continued and expanded in Canada. Shifts and elaborations in description of meaning can be seen by a survey of the well-known motif called "forty triangles." Sumtsov discusses this motif briefly by pointing out its similarity with an "archaic triangle that appears on ancient bronze decorations, clothes and mosaics with symbolic meaning" (365). Kylymnyk suggests that it can "symbolize

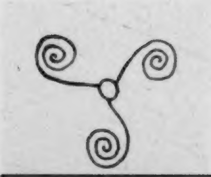

Figure 33. Pysanka motif "Tripod" (Tkachuk, Kishchuk, and Nicholaichuk 22).

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[54] For a discussion of the Trypillian culture and its influence on pysanka writing in Canada see subchapter "Form and Design" of this chapter.

[55] *…tryhver abo trynih…vidomyi shche z Trypil's'koi kul'tury, nachebto znamenuie soboiu, na dumku odnykh, nebo, zemliu i povitria; na dumku druhykh – povitria, vohon' i vodu; treti vvazhaiut' za symvol zhyttia liudyny: narodzhennia, zhyttia i smert'; chetverti – nebo, zemlia i peklo t.d. Zvychaino, zapevnyty, shcho same vyznachaie te, a ne inshe, trudno, osoblyvo v nashi chasy ta shche i na chuzhyni.*

forty moments of a life, the household, a person's well-being, and the virtues of a man" (193). Some popular Canadian publications define it as a Christian symbol of the forty days of Great Lent, or the forty martyrs (e.g., Kozhetz 1951: 2; Iuzyk 1975). In others, the interpretation of this motif as a Christian symbol is further emphasized by justifying its pre-Christian meaning:

> The [motif] forty triangles…represents the many facets of life; for example, family matters such as the birth of children, weddings, and travel, farming, animal husbandry and strength. The magic number three enclosed the wish or prayer for each special area of life. In Christian times, forty triangles represented the forty days of Lent, the forty days of Christ's fasting and the forty martyrs (Kmit , L. Luciow, J. Luciow, Perchyshyn 34).

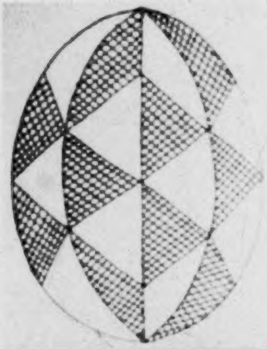

Figure 34. Pysanka motif "Forty triangles" (Tkachuk, Kishchuk, and Nicholaichuk 20).

Another example of the interpretation of the "forty triangles" follows:

> Reflecting the lifestyle of the pre-Christian era, each triangle, by prayer or magical belief, was assigned a specific meaning such as:
>
> - Worship of the heavens – sun, moon, stars.
> - Water, earth, air.
> - Affairs of husbandry – ploughing, seeding, sprouting, ripening or maturation, gathering of the harvest, threshing.
> - Flax, hemp, gardens, orchards, beekeeping, breeding and care of cattle.

- Family affairs – birth of children, growth of children, health of the master, wedding of the young, travel, strength (Tkachuk, Kishchuk, Nikolaichuk 20)

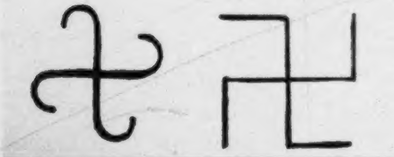

Figure 35. Pysanka motif "Swastika" (Tkachuk, Kishchuk, and Nicholaichuk 22).

While some popular sources do include reference information, providing it in the bibliography lists,[56] others present the information about symbolism as "common knowledge," without any reference to outside sources.[57] For example, from the handbook *Iak pysaty pysanky* [How to write pysanky] compiled by Rozyna Dragan for the Ukrainian summer course at the Petro Mohyla Institute in Saskatoon in 1947, readers can learn that the "swastika" appearing on the pysanka under its folk names "*hachkovyi khrest*" [bent cross] and "*kryvul'ka*" [crooked line] and others, means "happiness" and "blessing" (5). However, the author does not indicate any source of reference for the semantics of this and other motifs.

The quote below clearly exemplifies the tendency for politicizing the pysanka within the author's interpretation of its motifs. In this particular case this phenomenon is meant to show the uniqueness of Ukrainian nation to its potential enemy – Soviet regime:

> These symbols, signs on pysanky have been used in all the territories of Ukraine, despite the borders that would be imposed [externally]…This is the evidence of our unity and our national identity, discrete from other nations – a fact, which is denied by our enemies. This means that they [pysanka motifs] were

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[56] See, for example, N. Faryna, ed. "Pysanky" (1976); Tkachuk, M., Kischuk, M. and A. Nicholaichuk "Pysanka: Icon of the Universe" (1977); A. Kmit, I. Lusiow, J. Luciow and L. Perchyshyn *Ukrainian Easter Eggs and How to Make Them* (1979); Onyshchuk, O. *Symvolika ukrains'koi pysanky* [Symbolism of the Ukrainian Pysanka] (1985); Man'ko, V. Ukrains'ka narodna pysanka [Ukrainian Folk Pysanka] (2001).

[57] See, for example, Surmach, Gloria. "Easter eggs" (1952; 1955); Mielke, D. *Pysanka Party* (n.d); Biniashevs'kyi, E. "Ukrains'ki pysanky" [Ukrainian pysanky] (1993).

> created at the time when we were one indivisible [independent] people. (Koshetz 1958: 4)[58]

These (and many other examples) demonstrate that the pysanka and the symbolism of its motifs inspired active interpretation within the National/Ethnic paradigm. Such interpretation was influenced by ethnographic publications and the spiritual need for symbols that are meaningful in a profound way. Having been learned from published materials, these symbols held great significance for the followers of the National/Ethnic paradigm, awakening pride in the richness of Ukrainian culture and history.[59] The following comment of Lesia Pohoreski partly illustrates the above-discussed:

> …I have read somewhere that it was…good luck to have the "*sorok klyntsiv* [forty triangles]"…We have a pysanka bingo at our church[60]…The older women…would come up to look at the prizes they could win: "look this, the "sororok klyntsiv [pysanka]"…That's what they really wanted…very powerful for them…

When they became available, published sources greatly influenced the Old Country Easter egg tradition. Although Anna Zwozdesky inherited knowledge about pysanky from her grandmother on a farm within the Old Country paradigm, she enriched this knowledge a great deal from publications in the National/Ethnic pattern. (She has a big collection of such sources). When I asked her about symbolism of the motifs, she replied, "You read this book, everything is written down there because that's too much to say."[61] Marianne Makowsky, who also acquired her knowledge on the pysanka from her grandmother and mother within the Old Country paradigm, pointed out the following:

---

[58] *Tsi symvoly, znaky na pysankakh vzhyvaiut'sia na vsikh prostorakh Ukrainy, ne dyvliachys' iakymy kordonamy nas podilyly b…i tse ie dokazom nashoi iednosty i nashoho natsional'noho ia, okremoho vid inshykh natsii, shcho nam zaperechuiut' nashi vorohy. Tobto, vony stvorylys' shche todi, koly my buly odnym, nepodil'nym narodom.*

[59] While conducting interviews, I have not met a single pysanka writer who would question such interpretations and not accept them as a self-evident truth.

[60] For a detailed discussion of a pysanka bingo, see subchapter "Function" of this chapter.

> [I] knew which [motifs] to put on eggs from our *baba* [grandmother] and mom, but the research [on]…what the different symbols are and what they mean I've done…on my own basically…[consulting different published sources].

Publications about the pysanka for children deserve separate attention.[62] In a playful, easily accessible style for children, the image of the pysanka was often personified and incorporated into enjoyable stories created, first of all, for educative purposes. To illustrate this, below is an example of a poem "Pysanka," written by Lesia Khraplyva in 1971. Interpretation regarding the symbolism of the motifs is presented through a conversation between the two images - the girl and the pysanka:

Girl:
Oh, dear pysanka, look what kinds of designs you have:
Stags, roosters, fir-trees and stars.
I look at you and admire you, but I am eager to know
What do they mean? Tell, my dear!

Pysanka:
The green fir-tree and horned stag
Will remind you of the green Carpathian Mountains,
The cross will remind you of the passion of Christ,
This is how Ukraine is crucified today…

And that meandering line that is running endlessly,
Because the truth will never die, it will last forever,
At the moment the rooster crows, morning will come,
This is how Ukraine will rise from captivity.

As brightly as a star or blossom,

---

[61] *Ty voz'my prochytai tsiu knyzhky, tam vsio pyshe, bo to duzhe bahato hovoryty.*

[62] Since 1950, *Zhinochyi svit* has included a separate page for its young readers under the title "*Dytiachyi svit*" [Children's world]. In the April or May issues coinciding with Easter, the children's pages were devoted to Easter and pysanky. A similar page has been included in *Nasha doroha* ("*Nashym naimenshym*" [For our youngest] and in *Promin'* ("*Viddil dlia ditei*" [Children's section]). See, for example, stories written by Lesia Khraplyva in *Zinochyi svit* "Pryhody Pysanochky" [Adventures of a Pysanka] (1954), "*Iak zaichyk pysav pysanochku*," [About Bunny writing a pysanka] (1956), and many others.

Her desired freedom will begin to shine for all to see! (Passage)[63]

Besides the meaning of the specific motifs such as "stag," "fir-tree," "meander," interpreted by the author, in this poem the pysanka is presented as a symbol of Ukraine and its dream of independence, while the motif of a cross is associated with the passion of Christ, reminding the reader of the suffering of Ukraine under the Soviet system. In such a way, the Ukrainian Canadian child was expected to learn about both his heritage and the history of his ancestral motherland, and to grow up with a national consciousness – one of the principle concerns of the builders of the National/Ethnic paradigm.

The same kind of pride can be traced among Ukrainian Canadian pysanka writers in regards to a variety of designs from different regions. This topic is highlighted in more detail in the subchapter "Form and Design." In this particular context, let me emphasize only what already was pointed out above: a great variety of designs have been published in Canada since the late 1920s. Published sources represented pysanka designs of the different regions of Ukraine. In the postage stamps published by Zenon Elyjiw in 1958

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[63] *Divchynka:*
...Oi, pysanko liuba, iaki v tebe vzory:
To oleni, pivni, ialynky, to zori...
Dyvuius', liubuius', ta znaty b khotila,
Shcho kazhut' tsi vzory? Skazhy meni, myla!
Pysanka:
Ialynka zelena I olen' rohatyi
Tobi pryhadaiut' zeleni Karpaty.
A khrest nahadaie terpinnia Hospodni;
Tse tak Ukraina rozpiata siohodni...

A toi bezkonechnyk bizhyt' bezkonechno,
Bo pravda ne zhyne, a zhytyme vichno.
A piven' zapie, to ranok nastane,
Otak Ukraina z nevoli povstane.

I zirkoiu-kvitom usim zasiaie
Ozhydana volia - tse dobre ia znaiu!

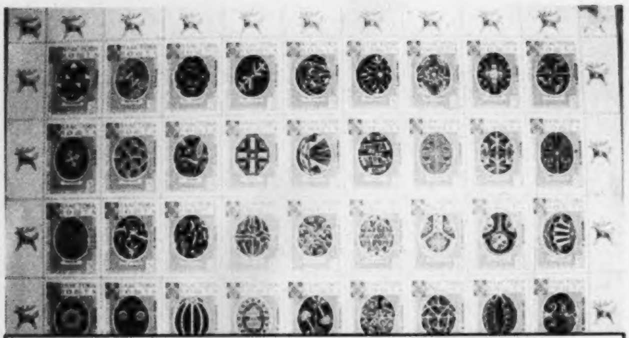


Figure 36. Ukrainian Easter Eggs: Postage Stamps (Elyjiw 1958).

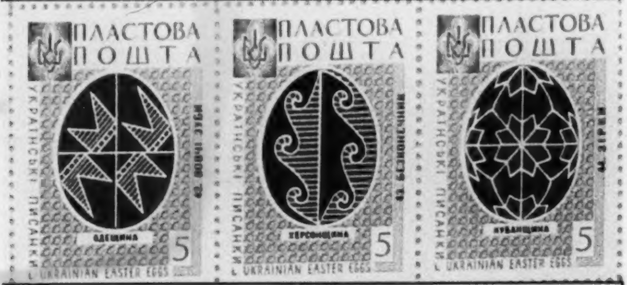
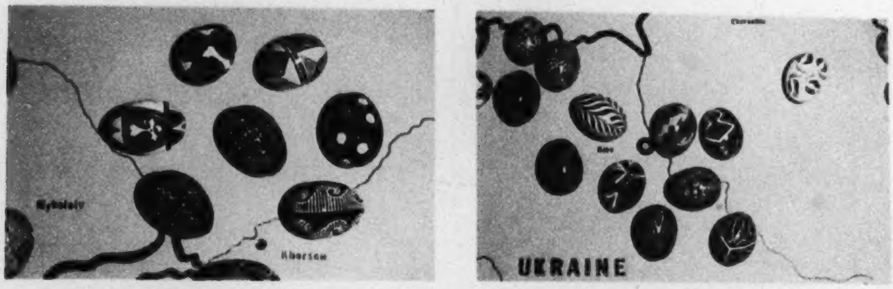


Figure 37. Pysanky "*Vovchi zuby* [Wolf's teeth]" (Odesa region), "*Bezkonechnyk* [Meander]" (Kherson region), "*Zirky* [Stars]" (Kuban' region) as presented on the postage stamps.

through the organization *Plast*,[64] each stamp presents a different pysanka with its name and the region it belonged to in Ukraine.

Another example is the book *Pysanka: Icon of the Universe*, where pysanky are introduced on the background of a map.

In addition to traditional patterns, accomplished North American pysanka writers



26. Kherson Region

27. Kyjiw Region

Figure 38. Pysanky of the Kherson and Kyiv region as presented in *Pysanka: Icon of the Universe*.

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[64] The Ukrainian Youth association called Plast was formed in the city of L'viv, western Ukraine, in 1911. Among its main goals are developing moral character and leadership abilities as well as promoting patriotism. In Canada, the first Plast was organized in 1948 (Starosolsky 36-38).

presented their own newly-created designs to a broader audience by publishing them. Often, new designs are based on the old ornaments, incorporated into various compositional structures and filled with different combinations of colors, as, for example, *Ukrainian Easter Eggs and How We Make Them*.

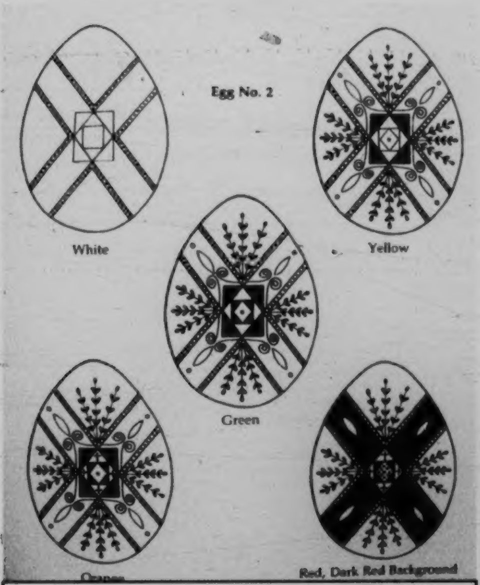
Egg No. 2
White
Yellow
Green
Orange
Red, Dark Red Background

Figure 39. Pysanka design and step-by-step procedure for writing it as presented in *Ukrainian Easter Eggs and How We Make Them* (Kmit, L.Luciow, J. Luciow, Perchychyn 67)

American pysanka writer Natalie Perchyshyn in her book *Decorating Ostrich Eggs the Ukrainian Way*, which seems to be very popular in the collections of Ukrainian Canadians, offers very elaborate and intricate arrangements of designs to be applied to ostrich eggs.

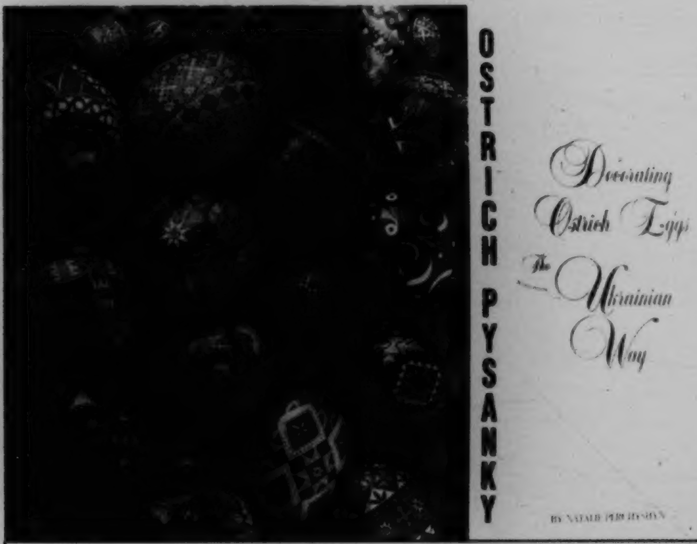
OSTRICH PYSANKY
Decorating
Ostrich Eggs
The Ukrainian
Way
BY NATALIE PERCHYSHYN

Figure 40. *Decorating Ostrich Eggs the Ukrainian Way*, book cover.

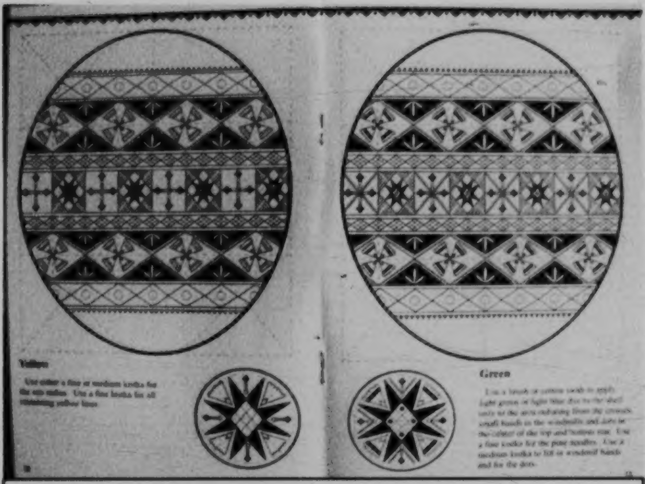

Figure 41. Design for the ostrich egg, created by N. Perchyshyn (1996: 12-13)

Pysanky courses, workshops and public demonstrations have been actively conducted by women's organizations since the beginning of their establishment in the late 1920s.[65] They have been led by accomplished pysanka writers and attracted large audiences.

Maria Yurkiw demonstrates the great impact of urban-inspired pysanka courses and workshops on the development of Old Country pysanky in Ukrainian Canadian rural communities. Born near Krydor, Saskatchewan, in 1911, she left her family to attend school in Saskatoon in 1927, where she resided at the Petro Mohyla Institute, coming back to Krydor only occasionally to visit. The following is her description of writing *pysanky* in her parents' home:

> We all wrote…[we] would sit around with that wax and stylus, and all would write. Whatever they [pysanky] looked like, but still were written [sarcastically]…[Our] mother knew [how to write] from Ukraine…But already later on such artistic ones [were written], when I came back from Saskatoon, from

---

[65] Reportedly, one of the first public demonstrations of writing pysanky took place in the context of the exhibitions of Ukrainian folk art in P. Mohyla Institute in Saskatoon in 1929 and 1930. They were organized by the members of the UWAC, "mainly for foreigners" (Kohuska 63-6). A separate "project of writing pysanky" was included in the UWAC's 1936-37 "plan of folk art." This project was developed in order to teach the organization's members how to write pysanky (Kohus'ka 70). *Zhinochyi svit* has constantly reported on public as well as private pysanka courses. For example, on March 26, 1952 there was a course on pysanka writing conducted by M. Levtsun at the Koval'chuk home in Toronto, Ontario (Vi-Ke-Ma 1952). Another example is the demonstration of writing pysanky included into the agenda of the UCWLC in Yorkton, Saskatchewan meetings in 1981 *(Nasha doroha* 1981).

> the Institute, I brought such a nice [pysanka home], …they taught us…in the Institute how to write pysanky, so, we already knew…[66]

Having been started by the early women's organizations, pysanka courses, workshops and public demonstrations were later implemented by other Ukrainian institutions, including various organizations, churches, schools, and privately. Although these activities were organized predominantly at pre-Easter time, the knowledge about the pysanka started to be transmitted increasingly throughout the year. The example of Natalia Talanchuk illustrates the teaching experiences of a great majority of the pysanka writers interviewed. She has been an activist with a number of the Ukrainian organizations "since the minute [she] came to Canada" in 1947 and an active pysanka writer since the1950s:

> …I have been transmitting my knowledge on the pysanka…For example, at the Ukrainian Youth Association [67] I have organized different courses…It was in the 1960s, 1970s, 1980s…and at hospitals as well, because here the Ukrainian Canadian Congress [68] was helping older people who were in the hospitals, confined to their armchairs…I usually had twenty five or more people who would participate in that…
>
> [I have taught pysanka writing] at schools when I was invited…For example, a few years ago Olia M. invited me to a public school…It was a very big classroom full of children, small and big, and mothers…so, it was necessary to tell them everything, to show and to transmit it to them. It was necessary…to show them the literature, to show them the exhibits of pysanky of different kinds with different symbols, to tell them about that…
>
> Also, I demonstrated [pysanka writing] at Heritage Days…when all the nations of Edmonton which exist here (Muslims, Christians, black and white] have their tents, their exhibits, their culture, as well as Ukrainians who have their

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[66] *My vsi pysaly,… i to iak sidaiut' z tym voskom i kistkoiu i vsi pyshut'. Iaki vny buly [sarcastychno], ale pysani... Mama znala z Ukrainy…Ale vzhe potim to vzhe taki artystychni, vzhe iak ia pryikhala z Saskatunu, z Instytutu, to vzhe pryvezla taku fainu, …nu to vony nas uchyly…v instytuti, iak pysaty pysanky, to my vzhe znaly…*

[67] Ukrainian Youth Association (*Spilka ukrains'koi molodi* (SUM)) is an émigré youth organization, established in Germany in 1946. It is presented in its statutes as a patriotic institution, whose slogan is "God and Ukraine" (Vaskovych 445-7).

[68] Ukrainian Canadian Congress (Konhres ukraintsiv Kanady (KUK)) is an umbrella organization of the Ukrainian community of Canada, formed in 1945 in Winnipeg (Husar-Struk 357-8).

> tent…And they advertise Ukrainians, so, that people know what we have, what a spiritual treasure we have…[69]

Interestingly, Natalia Talanchuk herself (as well as many other active builders of the National/Ethnic paradigm) "did not hear about the pysanka until [she] came to Canada." She was born in the city of Dnipropetrovs'k (eastern Ukraine), an urban area where this tradition was not practiced. She arrived to Canada as an adult political refugee after World War II in 1949. Natalia Talanchuk acquired her rich knowledge about pysanka writing and the symbolic meaning of different motifs formally, mostly through published sources, which form her large private collection.

Before discussing how Natalia Talanchuk's formally acquired knowledge is reflected in the National/Ethnic pysanka in terms of form and design, let me finish this subchapter with Talanchuk's comment, which summarizes the perception and understanding of the structured transmission of this knowledge by many individuals within this paradigm:

> …[if pysanka writing is practiced through courses and workshops], then people develop their tastes to their own [Ukrainian culture], they become interested in Ukrainian history, because whatever you want is written on the pysanka. There is a great part of our Ukrainian history from pagan times, from Cossack times, these motifs say something to us…One should read more, there is the literature on that in whatever language you wish…[70]

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[69] *…Ia peredavala ti svoi znannia pysancharski… Napryklad, u Spitsi Ukrains'koi Molodi vlashtovuvala rizni kursy…to bulo v 60kh, 70kh, 80kh… i takozh po shpytaliakh, bo tut Konhres Ukraintsiv Kanady KUK zaimavsia pomichchiu takym starshym liudiam iaki znakhodiat'sia po shpytaliakh prykuti do vizochkiv, … ia mala tam po dvadtsiat' piat' I bil'she osib sho braly uchast' u tim…*

…Po shkolakh, iak mene zaproshuvaly. A vo…kil'ka rokiv tomu nazad Olia M. bula zaprosyla mene do shkoly publychnoi…to bula duzhe velyka zalia povna ditei, malykh i velykyh, i mamy…tak sho treba bulo im rozkazaty pro to vse, i pokazaty, i peredaty im. Treba bulo… pokazaty im literaturu, pokazaty im vystavku riznoho rodu pysanok z riznymy symvolamy, rozkazaty pro to…

I ia takozh demonstruvala na dniakh spadshchyny pysannia pysanok pid shatrom…koly vsi natsii Edmontonu iaki tut isnuiut (i musul'many i khrystyiany, i chorni i bili) maiut svoi shatra, svoi vystavky, svoiu kukhniu, I tak samo Ukraintsi: maiut' svoie shatro… i reklamu robliat' dlia ukraintsiv shchoby liudy znaly sho my maiemo, iake my maiemo dukhovne bahatstvo.

[70] *[iaksho to praktykuiut po kursakh], to vony [liudy] todi rozvyvaiut' smak do svoho, tsikavliat'sia istorieiu ukrains'koiu, bo tut vse sho khochesh na tykh pysankakh. Tut ie velyka chastyna nashoi ukrains'koi istorii z*

3.1.2. *Form and Design*

In terms of form and design, National/Ethnic pysanky were distantly removed from those of the Old Country paradigm. One of the marked changes is connected specifically with the ornaments and motifs. As pointed out before, in Ukraine, each region had its own characteristic features in Easter egg designs and colors, forming a great variety of them from place to place, but a fairly limited repertoire in each specific place. Such designs, originating in various localities, were used for a generation by Ukrainians in Canadian rural communities.

However, a wide variety of designs from all over Ukraine, offered through the published materials of the National/Ethnic paradigm, reached these communities quite soon, as illustrated above. A great diversity of pysanka ornaments was introduced in the published sources, with or without references to the particular regions they once came from. The diversity discussed became a matter of pride for the achievements of Ukrainian pioneers (and their ancestors in Ukraine) and became considered a part of the rich Ukrainian Canadian cultural heritage, in the context of the National/Ethnic paradigm. They were presented and accepted as being attractive both ideologically and aesthetically. As a result, a single individual in Canada could realistically incorporate a great number of them in her creative pysanka writing.

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kozats'kykh chasiv, z pohans'kykh chasiv ...otzhe zh, to odno z druhym shos hovoryt', promovliaie...Treba bil'she chytaty, na to ie literatura, v iakii khochesh movi...

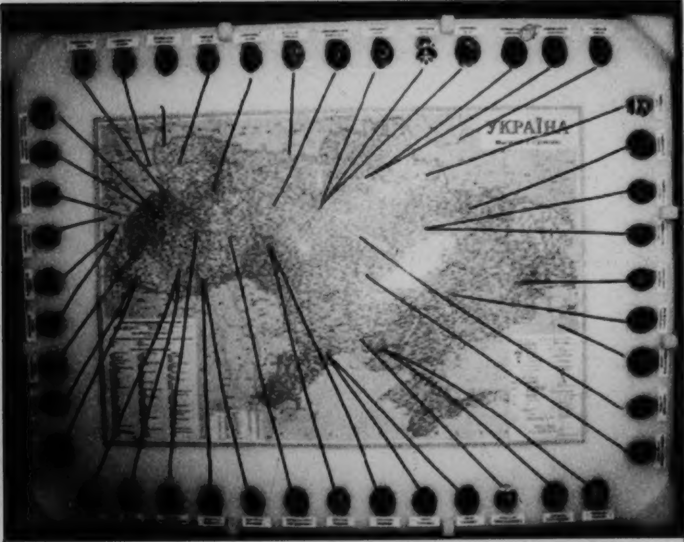

Figure 42. Pysanka map of Ukraine created by C. Kuc.

Figure 43. Chester Kuc and his collection of pysanky at his home in Edmonton. Each box contains Easter eggs representing the designs characteristic for a specific region in Ukraine.

Led by pride and desire for preservation and popularization, along with the feeling of great love for this creative activity, well-known pysanka writer Myroslav (Chester) Kuc from Edmonton created an actual pysanka map. For this, he used a large printed map of Ukraine and framed it with pysanky, situating them around the map. Each pysanka is connected with the region it belongs to with a piece of thread. Furthermore, during the last few years, Chester Kuc has accomplished a titanic pysanka project. He has reproduced approximately two thousand Easter eggs from all the regions of Ukraine, on the basis of the photographs from the collection from the L'viv Museum of Ethnography in Ukraine. Chester Kuc himself considers the three exhibitions of these pysanky, organized by him in Edmonton (in 1999, 2000 and 2002), to be "an eye opener" to the Ukrainian Canadian public: in terms of the designs, it includes a great number of regionally specific designs not seen before.

> It is an ancient form of folk art. It goes back to pre-Christian times and it's got a lot of meaning to it, and it's interesting because each different region [had] the different symbols, colors,… everything plays such an important part, and, I think, I did know very little about the pysanka, when I was younger, because we didn't have too much printed material, anything, or anyone that was really knowledgeable in that field...I think I do it in order to preserve the designs…for Easter, sure you take,…but my main purpose is to recreate the tradition of Easter eggs…I am trying to keep the traditional designs…preserve the tradition, I think this is my main purpose…It's been passed from generation to generation, and, I think, it's fascinating that we have been able to transmit, that we haven't lost our customs. There were conditions that wanted to destroy this folk art…I don't know if there are any other people in the world that would have such richness as we do…

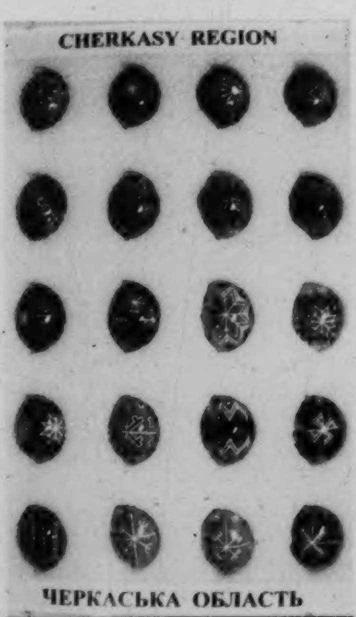

Figure 44. Pysanky of Cherkasy region reproduced by C. Kuc.

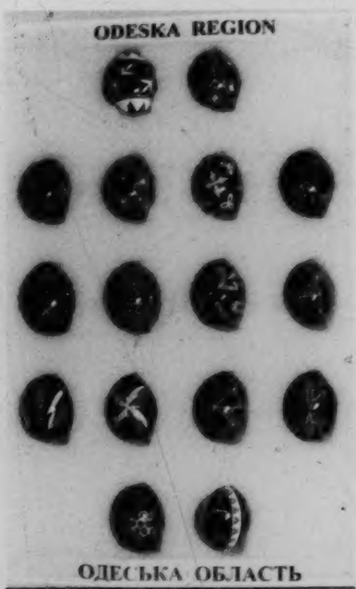

Figure 45. Pysanky of Odesa region reproduced by C. Kuc.

Although Kuc's work is unique, a great regional diversity is also presented in the production of all other pysanka writers interviewed. In some cases, such variety was encouraged externally – through potential consumers. The latter were often lead by their inner emotional feelings, reflected in certain preferences in regards to a particular region. Natalia Talanchuk shares her experience connected with such influence. Below is her response to my question about how she usually chooses the motifs for her pysanky:

> First of all, you have to be theoretically enlightened…You are supposed to know how to start with dividing the egg…and then to put appropriate things there, depending on your plan on what kind of a pysanka to write. For example, there are people, who are originally from Sokal'shchyna, and they are terribly fascinated with floral motifs: either some kind of a flower-pot with flowers or oak leaf or some kind of roses, or suns, or something like that that would be reflecting their spiritual culture [from Sokal' region]…Others, again, would be somewhere from Chernivtsi…and they would want something from Bukovyna region, still others would ask: "Do you have anything from Kharkiv region? Because I am from Kharkiv. "OK, I will show you." Still others would say: "I am from Galicia." So, there is a very wide field for writing in Galicia [style] too. There is Podillia [region] there and, and Boiko pysanky are very beautiful there…[71]

As a result of pride for the richness of the Ukrainian heritage presented in the pysanka designs, easy access to them and/or potential consumer demands, a particular pysanky collection may include the designs representing different regions. To illustrate this, let us have a look at a small part of Eva Tomiuk's collection of pysanky. Among these designs, one can find those belonging to Bukovyna, Odessa, Zakarpattia, Hutsul, and Lemko (*shkrobanka*) regions. One can also find other specific pysanky, discussed further.

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[71] *Ty musysh buty naipershe teoretychno poinformovanyi… Treba znaty, pochynaty z podilu…i todi vidpovidni rechi tam kladesh, zalezhyt' vid toho, iakyi ty maiesh plian iaku pysanku pysaty. Bo iak, napryklad, ie liudy sho pohodiat zi Sokal'shchyny, vony strashenno zakhopleni roslynnymy vzoramy: abo iakyis' vazon z kvitamy, abo iakis lystia dubovi abo iakis' ruzhi, abo sontsia, abo shos podibnoho, shoby viddzerkaliuvalo ikhniu dukhovu kul'turu…Druhi, znovu, pokhodiat des zvidkys' z Chernivtsiv - bukovyns'ke shos khochut', a treti kazhut' "A ia z Kharkova , chy vy maiete shos takoho z Kharkivshchyny? "Dobre, ia Vam pokazhu." Druhi kazhut: "A ia z Halychyny." Otzhe zh, v Halychyni takozh, duzhe shyroke pole do popysu. Tam i Podillia, i boikivs'ki pysanky duzhe harni ie.*

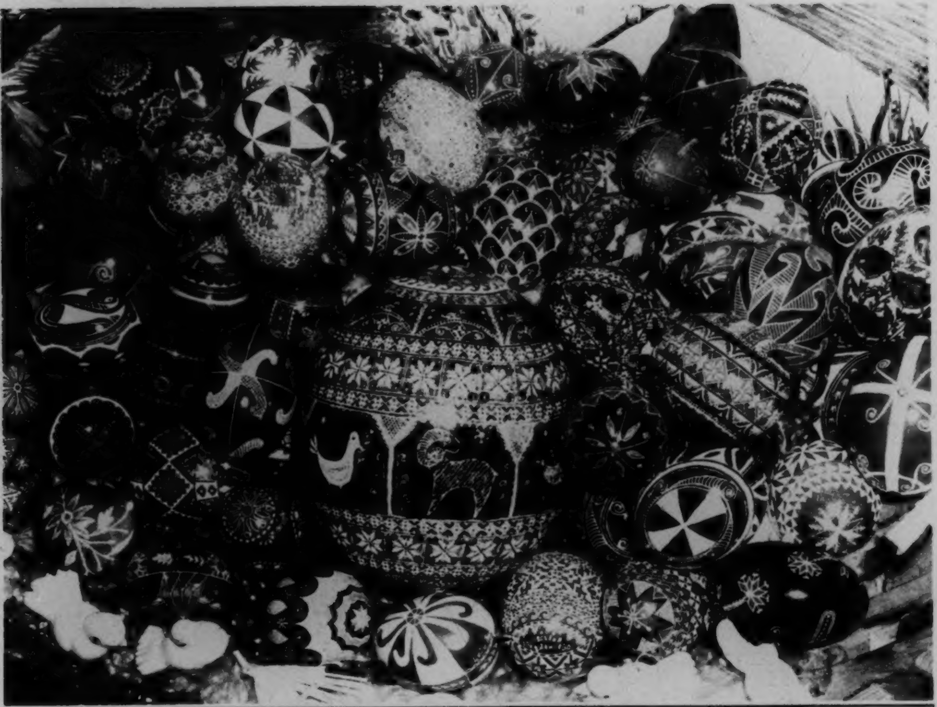

Figure 46. Part of E. Tomiuk's private collection of pysanky, written by herself.

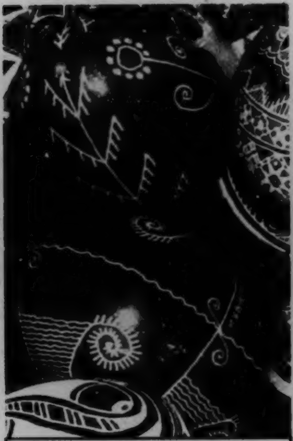

Figure 47. E. Tomiuk. Pysanka of the Zakarpattia region as presented in *Pysanka: Icon of the Universe* (Fig. V).

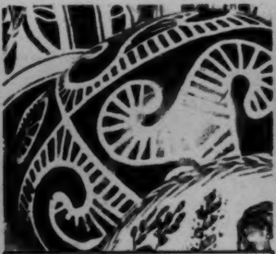

Figure 48. E. Tomiuk. Pysanka of the Odesa region as presented in *Pysanka: Icon of the Universe* (Fig. V)

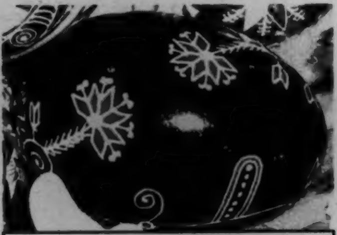

Figure 49. E. Tomiuk. Pysanka of the Bukovyna region, as presented in *Pysanka: Icon of the Universe* (Tkachuk, Kishchuk, and Nicholaichuk, Fig. III).

Often, pysanka writers incorporated different elements of pysanky from various regions onto one egg. As a result, for example, one obtains Hutsul animal elements such as a "stag," "horse," or "ram" on a different (non-Hutsul) region's ornamental background, as in the case of some Natalia Talanchuk's pysanky.

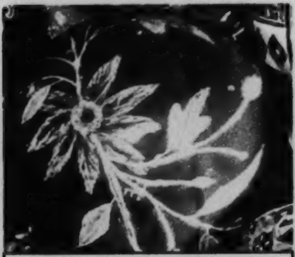

Figure 50. E. Tomiuk. *Shkrobanka* of the Lemko region as presented in *Pysanka: Icon of the Universe* (Fig. III).

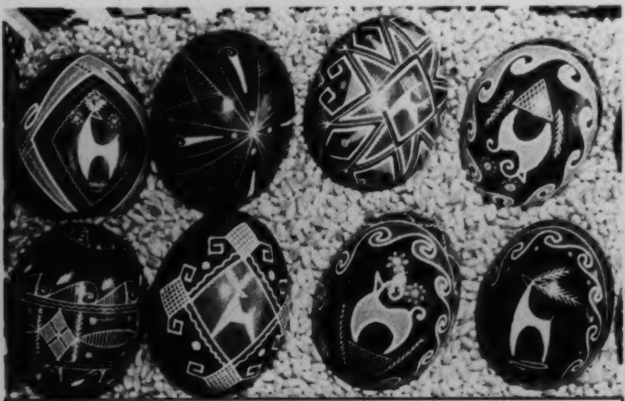

Figure 52. Pysanky written by N. Talanchuk. The motifs "horse," "stag" and "ram," originally characteristic for the Hutsul region in Ukraine (Elyjiw 1994; Solomchenko 2002) are stylized by the author and incorporated into her own compositions.

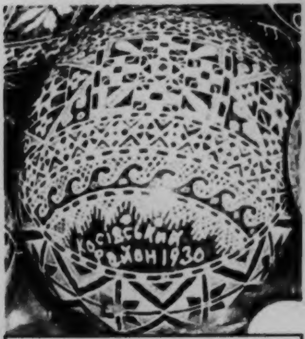

Figure 51. E. Tomiuk. Pysanka of the Kosiv district, Hutsul region, as inscribed on the egg.

The diversity of Ukrainian pysanka designs within the National/Ethnic paradigm was not limited to those based on the motifs originally belonging to different Ukrainian regions. In addition, Trypillian designs were adapted to Ukrainian Canadian pysanka writing.[72] The discovery of the Neolithic Trypillian culture (3rd – 2nd millennia BC),

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[72] The Neolithic Trypillian culture was discovered on the territory of contemporary Ukraine in the late 19th century. One of the first researchers of it was archaeologist V.V. Khvoiko. With the help of archaeological excavations, a great number of clay remnants belonging to this culture were discovered. Numerous publications devoted to the Trypillian civilization started appearing since the 1930-1940s in the Soviet Union (Zbenovych 1989). Many scholars came to consider Trypillians as the ancient ancestors of Ukraine and the oldest ethnic base of Ukrainian people. Information on the Trypillian culture has also been reaching the Ukrainian communities in Canada. In Canada, Trypillian designs were predominantly applied

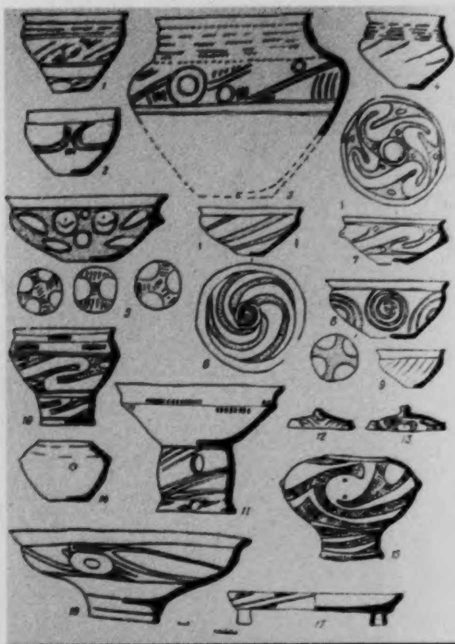

Figure 53. Samples of Trypillian pottery from the areas of Oleksandrivka, Slobidka-Zakhidna and Tymkovo (from Patokova, Petrenko, Burdo and Polishchuk 14).

with the original ornamental motifs of its pottery remnants found on the territory of present-day Ukraine, awakened a great interest in Ukrainian Canadians as well as pride for the great artistic achievements of Ukraine's predecessors. A variety of animal and geometric motifs inspired from Trypillian pottery were applied to pysanky in Canada as a matter of pride and as an aesthetic response to visually pleasing designs. In the private collections of all the pysanka writers and collectors I have visited while conducting this research, at least a few "Trypillian" pysanky are displayed.

Natalia Talanchuk illustrates the perception of this phenomenon by many followers of the National/Ethnic paradigm:

> They [the Trypillian designs] do not belong to the tradition [of the pysanka], but they have deep roots in our history…Thousands of years ago, people painted these symbols on their pottery, so, they have lasted for millennia.

---

to different kinds of ceramic pottery. Such pottery and the interpreted symbolism of its designs have received much attention in women's periodicals. See, for example, Chrystia Stodilka's "Ukrainian Ceramics" (1974). See also Orysia Tracz's "Trypillian" Influenced Ceramics" (1981). Another example is Larissa Watzke's "Ukrainian Folk Ceramics" (1982).

That is why they are not foreign, they are traditional…[73]

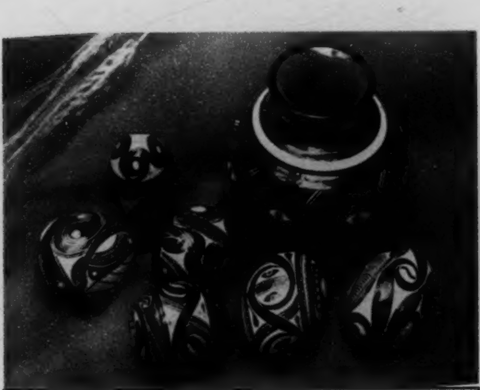

Figure 54. "Ukrainian Easter Eggs: Trypillian Style - Neolithic Era." Post Card. Minneapolis: Ukrainian Gift Shop, n.d.

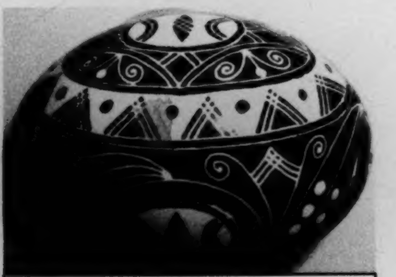

Figure 56. "Trypillian" pysanka written by N. Talanchuk.

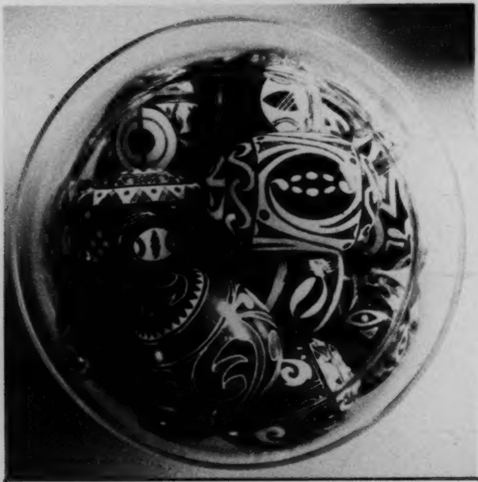

Figure 55. "Trypillian pysanky" of N. Talanchuk.

Furthermore, in addition to designs representing regional and Trypillian styles, a third type of the National/Ethnic pysanka has developed. The Easter eggs of this style are often defined as "*suchasni*" or "*moderni,*" signifying "modern" on the emic level. For creating such a pysanka, different geometric, floral, animal (including Trypillian) motifs tend to be stylized into minute and intricate forms and incorporated into extremely complex compositional structures. The pysanka made from an ostrich egg from Eva Tomiuk's collection discussed above fits into this category of designs.

---

[73] *Vony…ne pidliahaiut' do tradytsiinosti, ale vony maiut hlyboke korinnia v nashii istorii… Tysiachi rokiv tomu nazad liudy vymaliovuvaly tsi symvoly na svoikh hlechykakh, to vony peretryvaly taki dovhi tysiacholittia, tomu vony ne ie chuzhi, vony ie tradytsiini…*

Moreover, this particular pysanka has apparently been inspired by that presented in the book.

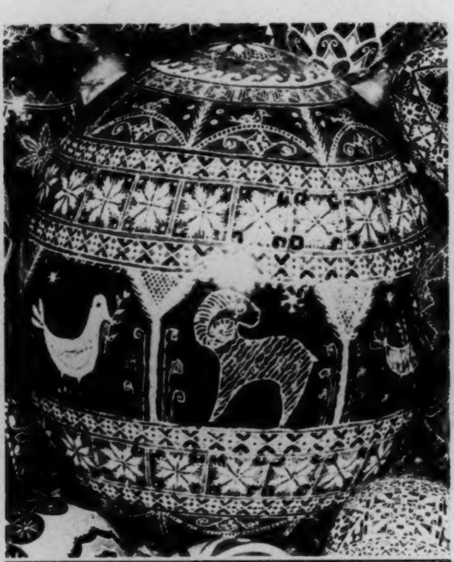

Figure 57. Ostrich egg written by E. Tomiuk.

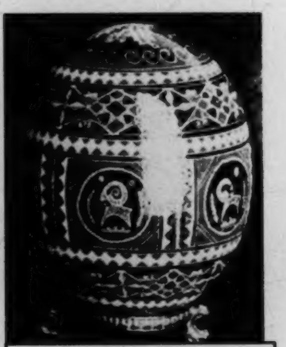

Figure 58. Ostrich egg presented in *Ukrainian Easter Eggs and How We Make Them* (Kmit, L.Luciow, J. Luciow, Perchychyn 91)

Other examples of "modern" pysanky are presented in the following pictures.

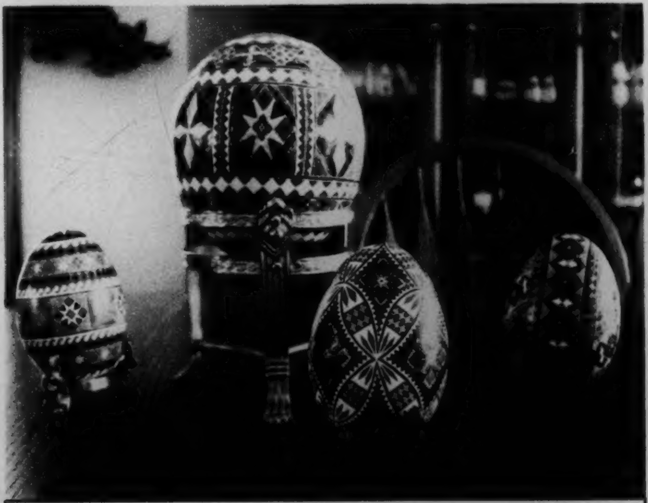

Figure 59. Pysanky by J. Blush.

The palette of colors for pysanky changed significantly within the National/Ethnic paradigm. As opposed to Old Country Easter eggs, whose colors were limited to those offered by natural sources and crepe paper, commercial synthetic dyes used in the National/Ethnic paradigm offered a broad spectrum of colors and shades, and an unlimited number of possible combinations. As a result, one can find diverse combinations which had not been characteristic for the Old Country Easter eggs. Now we can often see violet, pink, and purple or different shades of blue on one pysanka.

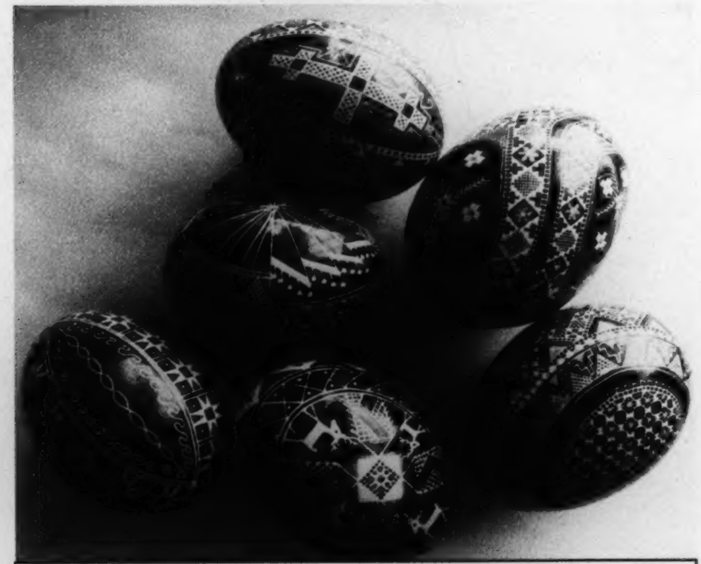
Figure 60. Pysanky written by J. Janis.

The improvisation and experimentation with the National/Ethnic pysanka was not limited to the examples presented above. Another characteristic feature of the National/Ethnic pysanka was the emergence of and strong emphasis on the individual in the context of collective art. The individual was reflected, for example, in the tendency to sign pysanky with the name or initials of the writer,

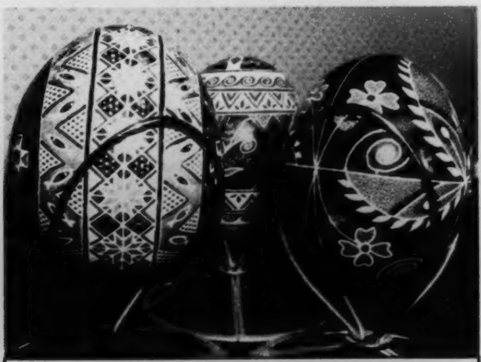
Figure 61."Blue" pysanky of N. Talanchuk.

the region to which the design belonged, and/or the date. If Chester Kuc attaches a separate label to each set of his Easter eggs, Eva Tomiuk writes such information directly on many of her pysanky.

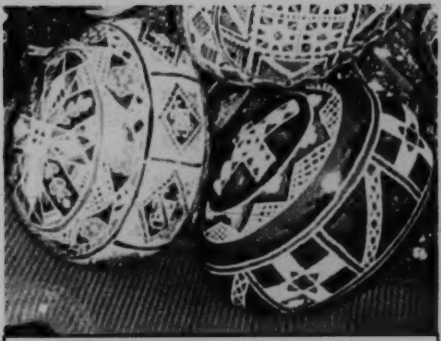
Figure 62. "Blue" and "violet" pysanky of M. Baziuk.

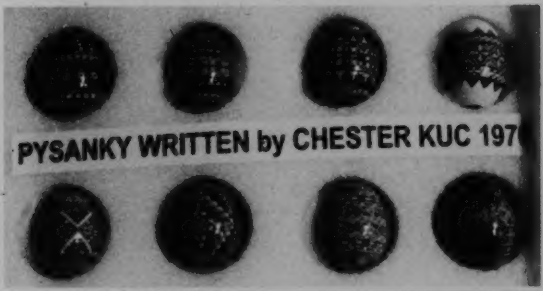

Figure 63. Pysanky of Chester Kuc written in 1970.

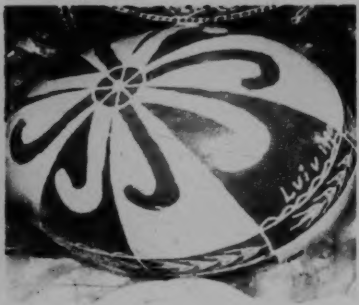
Figure 65. E. Personal label and date written onto a pysanka by E. Tomiuk.

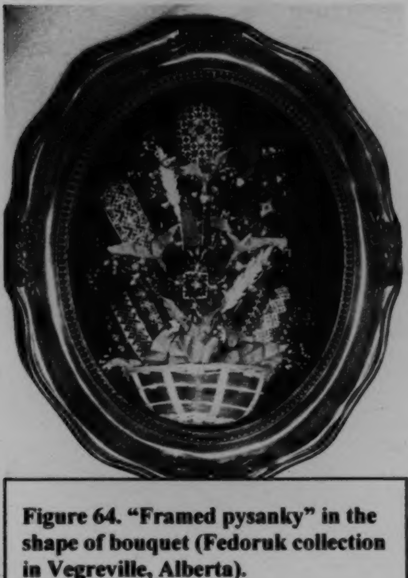
Figure 64. "Framed pysanky" in the shape of bouquet (Fedoruk collection in Vegreville, Alberta).

In terms of form, the most marked change for the National/Ethnic pysanka was presented by the so called "framed pysanky" and "pysanka jewellery." Despite their close overlap with the pysanka of the Popular paradigm, I consider these objects to be the products of the National/Ethnic trend. They still involve hand-written National/Ethnic Easter eggs and they are not

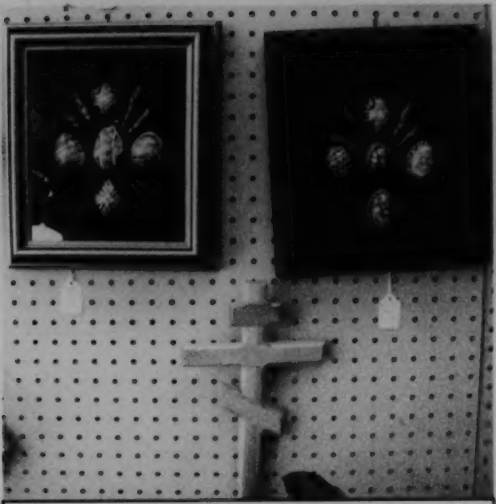

Figure 66. "Framed pysanky" in the shape of cross displayed at the Floral Boutique in Vegreville, Alberta.

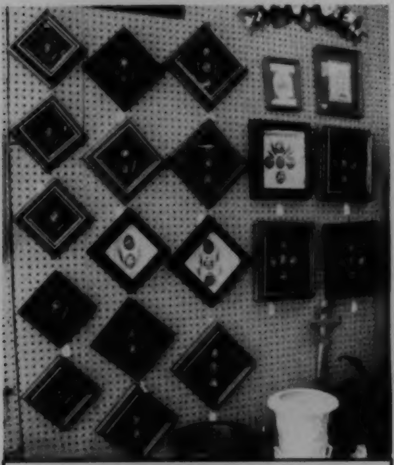

Figure 67. "Framed pysanky" of different compositional structures displayed at the Floral Boutique in Vegreville, 2005.

connected with the aspect of "fun" to the extent the other popular pysanka-related objects are. Furthermore, such objects are well accepted by the adherents of the National/Ethnic paradigm, as opposed to the humorous pysanka-resembling products of the Popular pattern that often elicit a very negative reaction.[74]

While conducting interviews, I did not find a single home without framed pysanky as part of the decorative displays. For making such a souvenir, the pysanka is blown, filled with plaster, split in half, and mounted onto a smooth hard surface. The background surface is often covered with a piece of cloth of a certain color and texture, which complements the entire composition. This type of decoration can include one or more halves of pysanky, which can be organized in a variety of compositions: chains, triangles, rectangles, squares, rhombuses or circles. Some of them are constructed as wall clocks with pysanka halves around the face of the clock. Arranged into a desirable composition, the decoration is then often framed under glass. In terms of compositional conception and size, an outstanding and innovative example of framed pysanky is a table at Myron Shewchuk's place in Vegreville, Alberta with the Easter eggs written by his aunt in the 1960s. In this case, the pysanky are not split in half.

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[74] These issues will be further discussed in Chapter 4.

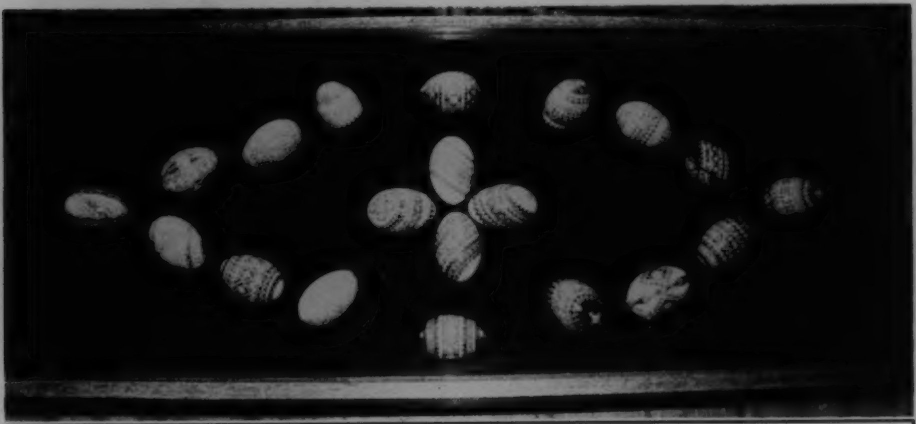

Figure 68. M. Shewshuk's "pysanka table" (top) at his home in Vegreville, Alberta.

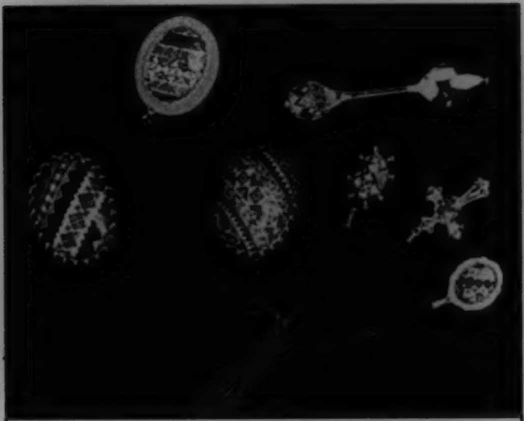

Figure 69. "Ukrainian "Pysanky" Jewellery." Post card. Vegreville: Floral Boutique, 1978.

"Pysanka jewellery" is also made out of real pysanky, cut into smaller pieces and then framed in metal borders.

Looking at the National/Ethnic pysanky, one can be amazed by their physical beauty and intricacy. One can immediately determine that they were written by steady professional hands of accomplished artists and with the help of advanced equipment. In combination with a great variety of intense colors and highly elaborate designs, National/Ethnic pysanky are very spectacular. "I would like to have a goose that would lay such eggs," was Prince Philip's reaction to the spectacular pysanky made of goose eggs, which the royal family received as a gift from Mrs. Sembaliuk in Vegreville during their visit in 1978 (Shewchuk, interview).

Looking at these items, one can easily understand the current emic perspective on the Old Country Easter eggs. Most respondents, remembering pysanky writing in their families in the first part of the 20th century, now consider them as "simple," "rough," "not that elaborate," as opposed to those "intricate," "fancy," and "highly elaborate" that appeared in Canada "later on."[75] One of the examples of such perception is depicted in Maria Yurkiw's sarcastic comment, presented above: "whatever they [early pysanky in her family] looked like, but still they were written."

In the same context, let us focus briefly another set of pysanka motifs. The following examples were written recently by Anna Zwozdesky as remembered from her mother, who brought them from the village of Hroshivtsi in Bukovyna. Among them are "*Ohirochky*" [Cucumbers], "*Paska*" [Easter bread], "*Velykden*" [Easter], "*Sorok Klyntsiv*" [Forty triangles] and others that were characteristic for this region. Although these pysanky can be considered to belong to the Old Country paradigm in terms of transmission and designs, they can hardly be accepted as such in terms of the artistic completion. The high degree of elaboration is obvious in this case. The lines are refined

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[75] This is a clear example of the complexity of the emic prospective. While remembering the pysanka as practiced in their parents' homes in the first decades of the 20th century, Ukrainian Canadian elderly people discuss it from the perspective of their current life-long experiences with the pysanka, including all the changes it underwent since pioneer times. As a result, we cannot be certain whether these individuals perceive the Old Country Easter egg in the same way as it was understood in the early 20th century.

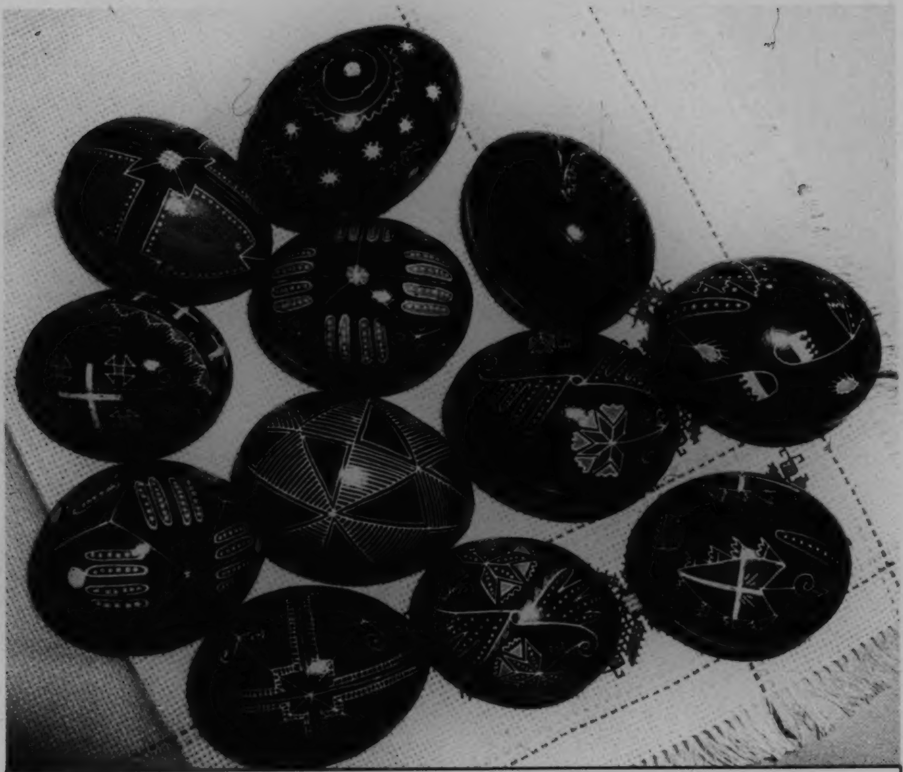

Figure 70. A. Zwozdesky. Pysanky written with the Old Country (Bukovyna) motifs as remembered from her grandmother and mother.

and delicate. Looking at these objects, one would never characterize them as "simple," "rough," and "not intricate." Such a contradiction lies in the great overlap of the Old Country and National/Ethnic Easter egg. Anna Zwozdesky, born in 1922, acquired her first knowledge about pysanky in the context of the Old Country paradigm from her grandmother on a farm in the area of Sheho, Saskatchewan. However, later on in her life, as a devoted member of the UWAC, she became an active pysanka writer within this institution, often participating in and developing different kinds of structured activities (such as pysanka courses and pysanka bingo). Today, pysanky from the Bukovyna region number only a small part of her collection, consisting of a great variety of designs presented by the National/Ethnic paradigm. Zwozdesky's artistic achievement of intricacy and high elaboration in pysanka writing is the result of her long time practice in this field.

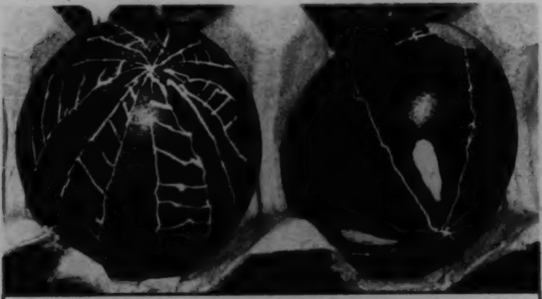

Figure 71. Unknown (adult) authors. Pysanky written at the Berry's pysanka party in Edmonton, 2005.

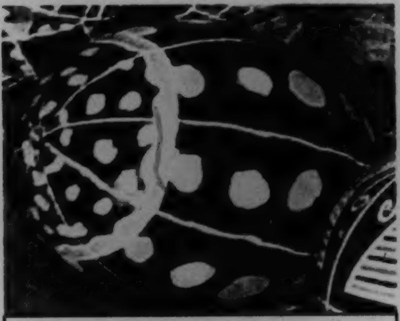

Figure 72. Anonymous pysanka (Pohoreski collection).

In contrast to those mentioned above, within the National/Ethnic paradigm there always were individuals who cannot be called accomplished pysanka writers. Although having formally acquired knowledge about the pysanka within this paradigm, these people write pysanky for the same purposes as it was practiced in the Old Country – once a year prior to the Easter celebration. As a result, in terms of design, these pysanky tend to be simpler and less technically accomplished than those of their more experienced counterparts.

4.1.2 *Production*

In the National/Ethnic paradigm, the production process of writing pysanky was markedly changed. The rapid development of technology facilitated the introduction of advanced equipment to the community. For example, the originally home-made stylus has become substituted by the machine-produced one, easily available at many Ukrainian stores in North America. However, from the perspective of both producers and consumers (pysanka writers) it is now called a "traditional" *kystka* since it imitates the home-made stylus through its physical shape. Additionally, more advanced styluses are offered – the so called delrin stylus (with a machine-made brass funnel and delrin handle) and, since at least 1975, the electric stylus (Yevshan 2002: 64; 2005: 3).[76] Since it is heated electrically, the latter helps to produce a smooth flow of wax and to control the thickness of lines. Some individuals combine two styluses, using the electric one for thin and intricate lines and a "traditional" (or delrin) one – for filling larger decorative elements (Zwozdesky, Talanchuk, Janis and others, interviews). Styluses are produced in different sizes: extra fine, fine, medium, heavy, extra-heavy as well as models with interchangeable tips of varying sizes (Yevshan 2002: 64; 2005: 3).

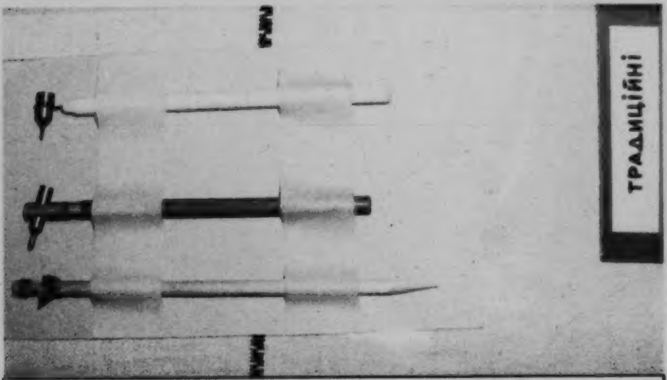

Figure 73. Styluses. UCAMA permanent exhibit. Inscription on the label: "Traditional."

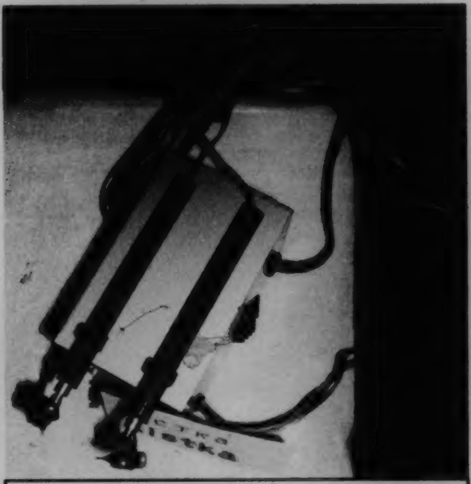

Figure 74. Electric styluses. UCAMA permanent exhibit.

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[76] The earliest note on that I was able to find was included in the instructional book as an advertisement in 1975 (Ference 1975).

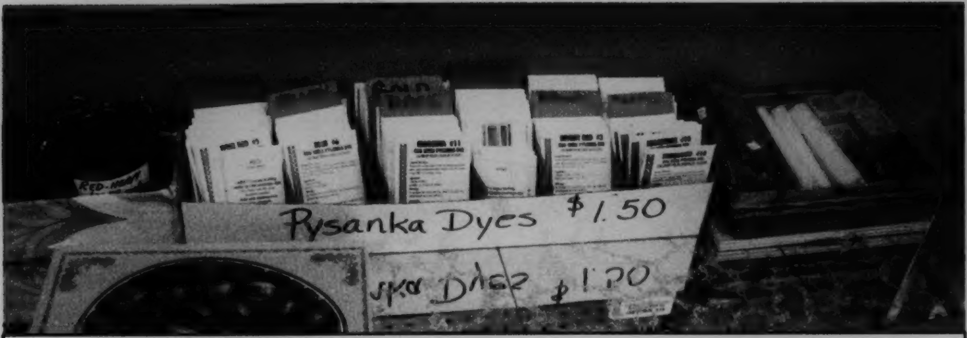

Figure 75. Styluses, dyes and wax displayed at the Vegreville Floral Boutique, 2005.

Commercial synthetic dyes completely replaced those based on natural sources and crepe paper. [77] "It is already easier for us [pysanka writers] to buy a small package [of commercial dye in the form of powder]," commented Anna Zwozdesky.[78] The following comment belongs to an active builder of the National/Ethnic paradigm Nadia Cyncar:

> I have always been for maintaining homemade natural dyes and the old way of coloring pysanky. However, it impossible to do this any more because it is a very long process and the [homemade] colors are not firm – they fade fast.[79]

Nadia Cyncar clearly demonstrates a great hesitation in accepting of the new technological achievements that can provoke "violations in tradition."[80] She illustrates the attitude that the preservation of the pysanka tradition is of a great concern within the National/Ethnic paradigm. On the other hand, she also shows the new aesthetic priorities that provoke the pysanka writers in this paradigm to rationalize and embrace changes.

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[77] Anna Lakusta mentioned that commercial dyes were available in their community's local store in Stuartbum, Manitoba, from the 1930s. By 1946, commercial dyes "Daiola," "Diamond" and "Sunset" (originally developed for coloring wool) were recommended for writing pysanky (C.C. 88)

[78] *Nam vzhe lehshe teper kupyty pachechku.*

[79] *Ia zavzhdy bula za tym shchoby zaderzhaty domashnii [sposib] kolioruvannia, ale tse ne vdastsia bo to ie duzhe protses dovhyi i vin ne ie tryvalyi, vony bliaknut'...*

[80] Preserving the tradition in its "pure" form was of a great concern of the builders of the National/Ethnic paradigm, as will be discussed further in this chapter.

Within the National/Ethnic paradigm, pysanky continued to be written mostly on raw eggs. Boiled eggs often became considered inappropriate in connection with the ideas expressed in some early ethnographic publications that emphasized the life potential of the raw egg. According to Vadym Shcherbakivs'kyi:

> The pysanka was not boiled in order not to ruin in it a potential life, life-giving power, in which lies the meaning of the pysanka…when it happened [that pysanky were boiled], it was, apparently, a result of the decline of the tradition" (7). [81]

In addition, boiled eggs are not used within the National/Ethnic paradigm due to new aesthetic priorities, as clearly explained by Lesia Pohoreski:

> I don't make mine on boiled eggs…There is a lot of hours spent in writing it as oppose to making a krashanka which is done in a minute.

In contrast to the Old Country pysanka, the contents of the eggs are often blown out, facilitating more dependable long-term preservation. Although many individuals use an ordinary syringe for this, special devices of various shapes have been developed and introduced to the community. Within the National/Ethnic paradigm, pysanky are frequently varnished. This process makes the eggshell physically stronger and reduces fading. Also, varnishing pysanky adds a special gloss and shine to the surface of the written egg. Lesia Pohoreski says:

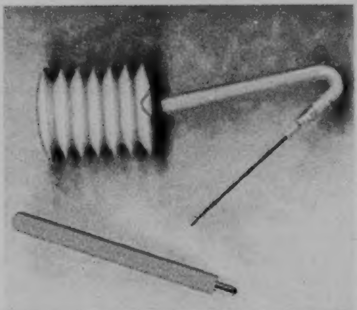

Figure 76. Blass-Fix Egg Blower (Yevshan Company 2005: 2).

> I blow out the eggs after I varnish them…but if I have eggs that were not blown out…before they were blessed, I have mixed feelings on this…I have a hard time blowing them out after church because that entire egg was blessed. So, how can I blow out the insides which were blessed?

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[81] *Pysanku ne varyly, shchob ne znyshchyty v nii zhyttia potentsial'noho, zhyvotvornoi syly, a v nii to i poliahaie znachinnia pysanky…koly se traplialosia, to, ochevydno, vid zanepadu zvychaia.*

Lesia Pohoreski shows the influence of the early ethnographic sources focusing on the life-giving and spiritual power of the raw egg blessed in church. It is interesting that blowing eggs out was commonly accepted by the adherents of the National/Ethnic paradigm. Some early Ukrainian ethnographers would probably consider an egg blown out as having lost its life-creating potential and spiritual power. (On the other hand, most raw farm eggs and especially commercially bought ones are infertile anyways).

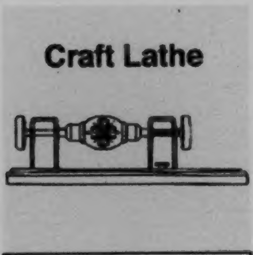

Figure 77. Craft Lathe (www. yevshan.com).

A new type of pysanka equipment is a device "Craft Lathe" which holds an egg and allows it to be rotated to help draw straighter lines.

Furthermore, at any Ukrainian Canadian gift store one can buy a developed kit including all the necessary basic equipment: wax, styluses, dyes and different patterns for pysanky.

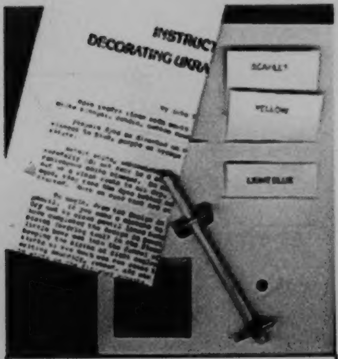

Figure 78. Mini Kit (www. yevshan. com).

Along with the "improvement" of technique, the advanced technological equipment affected artistic aspect of National/Ethnic pysanky a great deal. As illustrated above, the commercial synthetic dyes offered a wider range of colors. In addition, the invention of an electric stylus has allowed the production of very delicate lines.

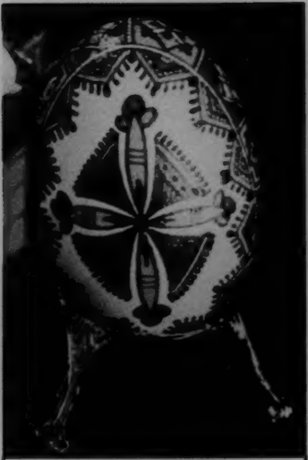

Figure 79. Pysanka, "Stained Glass" technique.

National/Ethnic pysanky were predominantly written in the Old Country wax-resist technique. However, some innovations in terms of production were presented, as, for example, the so-called "Stained Glass" type of design. For obtaining this special effect, the basic lines on the egg are written with dark wax. Then, the small areas of the design are filled with paint. The wax is not removed from this egg. At the end, the egg is painted with clear nail polish (Kmit, L. Luciow, J. Luciow, Perchyshyn 90).

3.1.4 *Function*

In terms of the function of pysanky, the National/Ethnic paradigm maintains a certain degree of continuity with the Old Country one. It is closely connected with and incorporated into Easter celebrations: Easter eggs are blessed in church and given away as gifts to loved ones, relatives and friends.

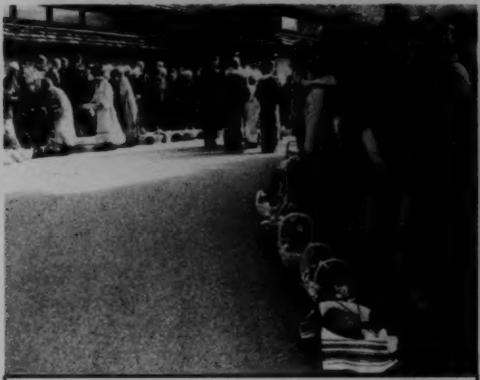

Figure 80. Blessing Easter baskets outside of the All Saints Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Saskatoon, 2005.

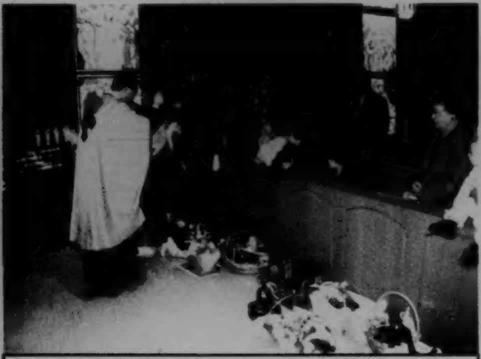

Figure 81. Blessing Easter baskets inside of the St. Basil's Ukrainian Catholic Church in Edmonton, 2005.

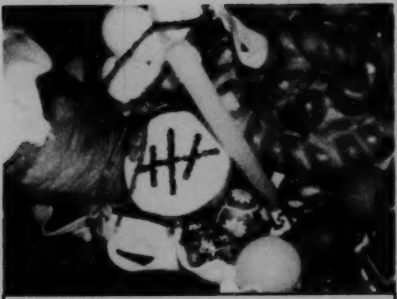

Figure 82. Easter basket including pysanky and *krashanky*. Edmonton, 2005.

However, some Old Country particularities of these performances such as, for example, giving pysanky away in commemoration of deceased have gradually disappeared. This was the result of urbanization, social and cultural changes. Anna Zwozdesky rarely gives pysanky in commemoration of deceased in her church community in Edmonton now, because many people are not familiar with this ritual and they "are indifferent to it." Furthermore, according to Zwozdesky, the ritual of *vlyvannia* was abandoned "later on" even in her community on a farm because "if girls made perms, if they curled their hair, they wouldn't want to be soaked."[82]

Other changes that occurred in the Old Country rituals were apparently connected with personal fantasy and inventiveness of certain individuals. With the help of creative enthusiasts, blessing pysanky in church and giving them away as gifts was sometimes enriched with innovations, appropriate to a new social and cultural environment. One of the Edmonton community's cultural leaders Lesia Pohoreski describes the tradition she established herself in her church:

> …When I used to conduct a choir, and we would sing at midnight service, I would write pysanky and I would have them in my *koshyk* [basket] and after they were blessed, (it's 3 o'clock in the morning), and we [choir members] were all in the auditorium,… they [choir members] had their Easter books of music, and I would put stickers in the books, and whoever had a sticker was to come to my *koshyk* after the service and get a pysanka. So, that was my way of sharing what I loved to do with my choir. And throughout the years, it would be funny because we would be singing in church, and they [choir members] would be

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[82] *My vzhe v Kanadi buly perestaly [to robyty]; divchata poroblie kucheri, perm, ta i vzhe mochyt'sia volossia, tai vzhe ne khochut' to robyty...*

> looking through their books trying to find stickers to see if… they could have a pysanka.

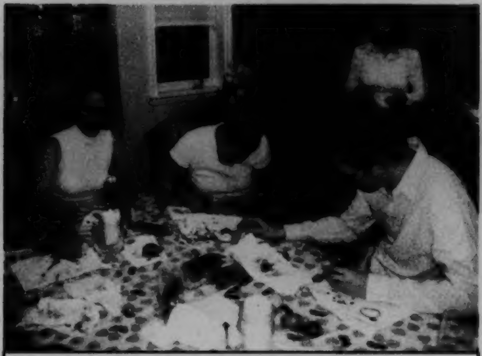

Figure 83. Pysanka party at Veronika and Daniel Berry's home in Edmonton, 2005.

Figure 84. Leslie Sereda writes a pysanka following the book at the Berry's party.

The same kind of attitude can be traced within the pysanka parties organized by Ukrainian Canadians in the narrow circles of their families and friends for social pleasure (M. Baziuk, K. Baziuk, Sereda, Boyko and others, interviews).

Furthermore, within the National/Ethnic paradigm, the Easter egg performs new functions, which were never associated with the Old Country pattern. The pysanka became a gift for any occasion at any time of the year. Marianne Baziuk gives an example:

> Kateryna [my daughter] graduated last year from a high school, and a lot of her gifts for her high school teachers were pysanky that she made last year. So, that was a gift of love, and thanks and appreciation to the teachers.

Marianne Baziuk herself received a box of spectacular pysanky ("modern" and "Trypillian") as a wedding gift (in 1985) from her aunt.

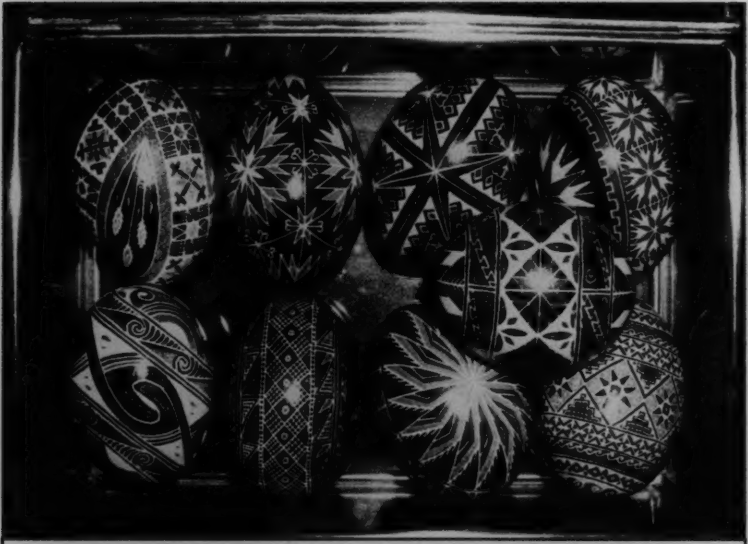

Figure 85. Box of pysanky: M. Baziuk's wedding gift, 1985.

Andriy and Kim Nahachewsky received a pysanka wall clock as a wedding gift in 1983 (Nahachewsky, personal interview).

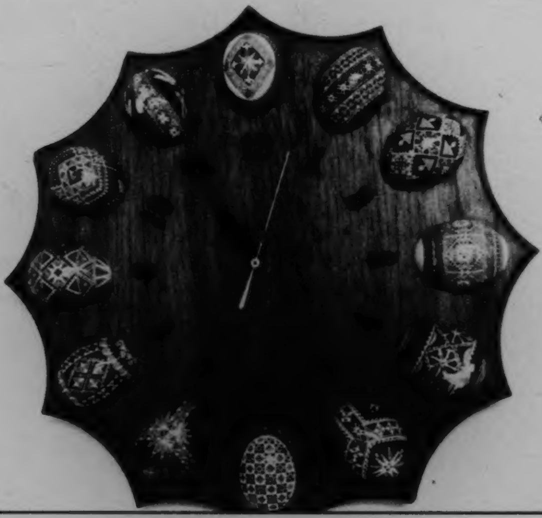

Figure 86. "Pysanka wall clock": Nahachewsky's wedding gift, 1983.

In contrast to eggs of the Old Country paradigm, National/Ethnic pysanky tend to be physically preserved for a long time. In several cases, Easter eggs, especially those that have sentimental value (such as those written by mothers or grandmothers who have since passed away) have been kept in some cases for forty, fifty years and more

(Hawrysh, M. Makowsky, Lakusta, Janis, Stefaniuk and others, interviews). Similar emotional factors seem significant in Lesia Pohoreski's case. The following is her answer to the question about how long she preserves pysanky:

> Forever…That's history,…the years are on them…I can look at my daughter, who is almost fifteen, and look at her egg [written] when she was four in *sadochok* [kindergarten]. I can see her life and see the things that she got into [on different stages of her writing],… [from] little drops,…round tears on the egg, to the beautiful geometric designs that she is doing [now]. For me, it's very personal. Almost all of my eggs are from my family. They are either written by my children, my sister or my husband's aunt, [who] lives in Saskatchewan. She wrote one when my first child was born, and she wrote the Lord's Prayer on that pysanka, and she put the date of the christening on it. It's very different but it's a lot of meaning to the family…I have a large ostrich egg that I keep. It was written by one of Orest's [my husband's] aunts in Hamilton. That was actually a wedding gift. It's fascinating…

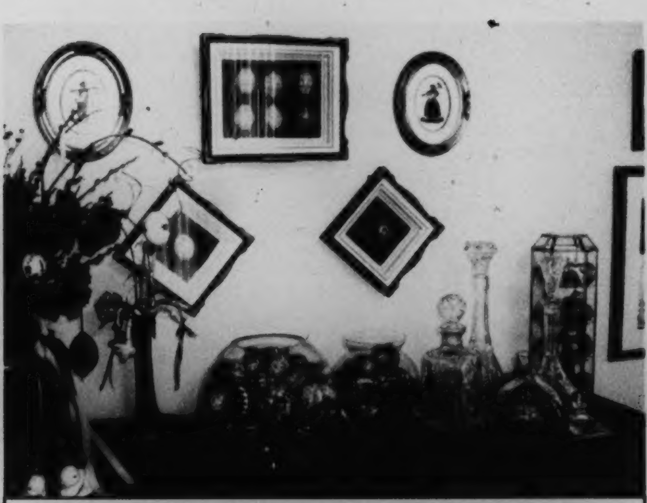

Figure 87. Makowsky home display of pysanky, Edmonton, 2005.

In addition to the sentimental factor, pysanky displayed in a variety of ways in a home interior serve as artistic decorations pleasing to the eye. The pictures included show just a few examples of home displays.

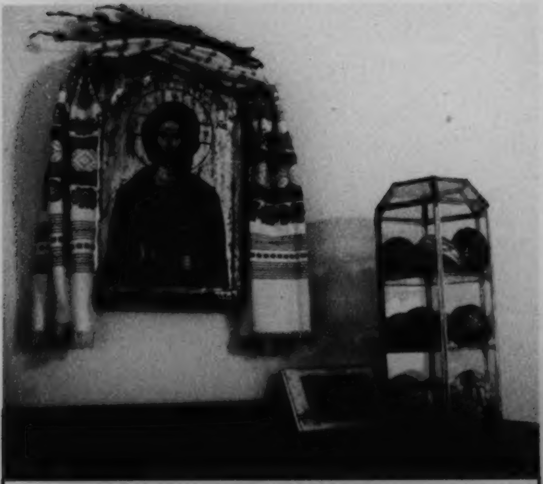

Figure 88. Makowsky home display of pysanky, Edmonton, 2005.

Figure 90. Janis home display of pysanky, Edmonton, 2005.

Figure 89. Talanchuk home display of pysanky, Edmonton, 2005.

Figure 91. Talanchuk home display of pysanky, Edmonton, 2005.

Figure 92. Pohoreski home display of pysanky, Edmonton, 2005.

Figure 93. Part of Tomiuk's private collection displayed in a basket. Painting of Ukrainian village landscape is attached to the back of the basket, creating a background for the pysanky presented. Edmonton, 2005.

Figure 94. Pohoreski home display of pysanky, Edmonton, 2005.

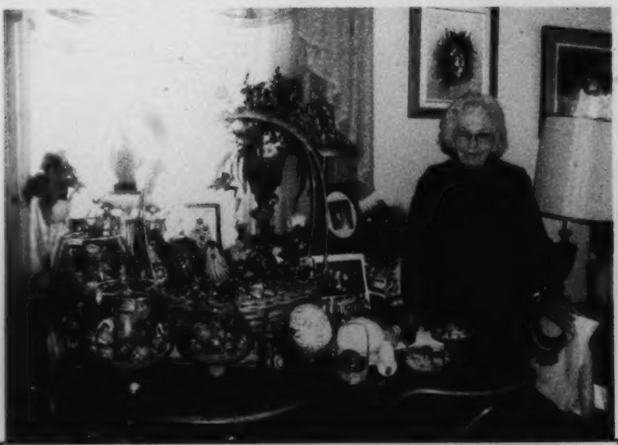

Figure 95. E. Tomiuk and part of her collection displayed on the table in the living-room at her home. Edmonton, 2005.

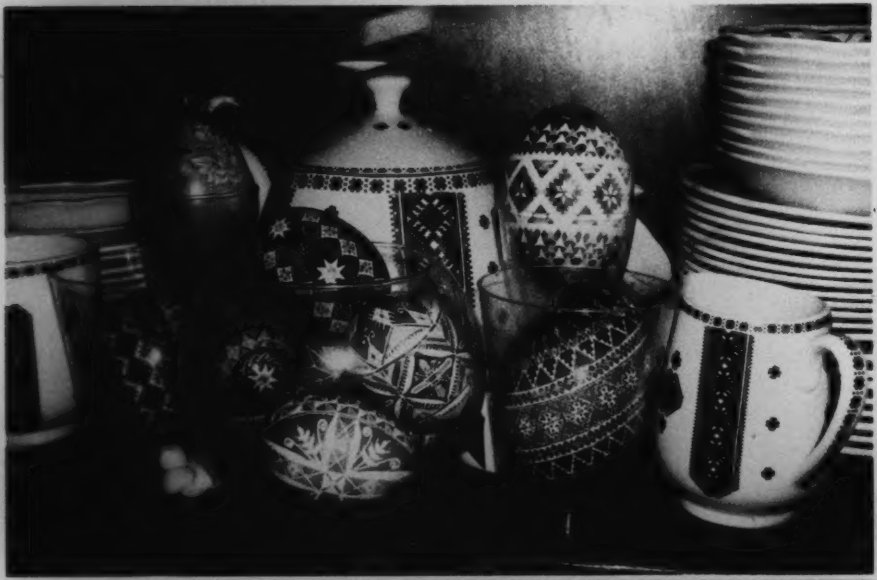

Figure 96. M. Shewchuk's pysanky displayed in the china-cabinet at his home in Vegreville. One of the eggs is a copy of the giant Vegreville Pysanka.

National/Ethnic pysanky have also been displayed for much broader audiences, representing Ukrainian heritage in the multicultural context in Canada since the late

1920s. Exhibitions included those of temporary character[83] and permanent museum displays.[84] The pictures illustrate the permanent displays of pysanky in UCAMA,[85] as well as in the UCWLC[86] and UWAC's museums in Edmonton.[87]

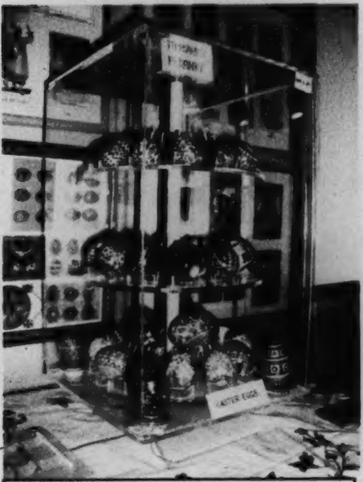

Figure 97. UCAMA permanent exhibit.

Figure 98. UMC – AB permanent exhibit.

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[83] Reportedly, the first exhibitions that included displays of pysanky were arranged in the late 1920s and early 1930s. For example, in 1929 and 1930 the UWAC was invited to organize an exhibition of folk embroidery, weaving, wood carving and Easter eggs by the University of Saskatchewan. In 1929, the international exhibition organized by the CPR took place in Regina where the Ukrainian pysanky and embroidery were displayed by the same organization. A "Ukrainian Pavilion" was arranged by the UWAC at the international exhibition in Chicago in 1933 (Kohus'ka 61-6). In 1951, the exhibition on the square "*Zelenyi Hai*" [Green Grove] near Wakaw Lake included the Easter eggs written by the students of a summer course at the Petro Mohyla Institute (Kohus'ka 86). The Ukrainian women's periodicals have provided many reports on different exhibitions of Ukrainian art including pysanky in the context of various events all over Canada. For example, one of such reports is about the display of pysanky from the private collection of Chester and Luba Kuc from Edmonton, which was a part of the exhibition organized by them in August 1986, in Edmonton (Cyncar 1986). In another report, we can read that on September 18, 1994, in Windsor, Ontario, the "fabulous Easter egg display…made by Anney Masney and Aranka Muzyka" was included into the exhibition of Ukrainian arts and crafts in the context of the organization's Night Annual Scholarship Tea (Nedin 1994).

[84] Reportedly, the official opening of the first Ukrainian museum in Canada was held on December 27, 1941 in Saskatoon, following many years of preparation and collecting items (including pysanky) by active members of the UWAC. Later, branches of this museum were established in Toronto, Edmonton (1944) and Winnipeg (1950) (Kohus'ka 71-86).

[85] UCAMA started on the basis of the private collection of Hryhoriy and Stephania Yopyk in 1968 and officially opened in 1974 (Yopyk 2, 30).

[86] UCWL's museum was officially founded in 1952 (Holoborodko 2004: 11). Its collection today numbers more than a hundred pysanky. The UMC – AB and UCAMA's collections have between fifty and a hundred pysanky (Holoborodko 42)

[87] For a detailed discussion and analytical interpretation of these museums, their exhibits and related activities see V. Holoborodko's "Custodians of Ukrainian Heritage: Three Ukrainian Museums in Edmonton."

Figure 99. N. Cyncar, the director of the UCWLC museum in Edmonton. In the background – museum's permanent exhibit.

Within the National/Ethnic paradigm, pysanky were incorporated into other structured activities. In the late 1960-early 1970s, pysanka contests were organized by the UCWLC in Edmonton, Alberta (Cyncar, Kuc, Tomiak, interviews). Contests, as a form of encouragement to a certain activity, attracting the attention of the audience, stimulating competitiveness and simultaneously influencing the improvement in the different fields of creativity, seem to have been very popular in Canada since the early 20th century.[88] Within the contests, pysanky became evaluated as artistic objects by *znavtsi* [connoisseurs], who acquired their knowledge about this phenomenon from published sources, and pysanka writers, well-trained in the technique of writing within the National/Ethnic paradigm, as described by Nadia Cyncar below. From this quote, we can also trace the political intention to disseminate this kind of art, to popularize it by collecting different patterns and learning new techniques. Nadia Cyncar was among the organizers of the five pysanka contests in Edmonton:

> We had five contests here, in Alberta…[organized] in order to trace who wrote pysanky and how they wrote and in order to collect for the museum those first samples that were still kept by our people in provinces,...[also] we wanted to know who wrote *shkrobanky*…We had money prizes. We invited juries from a variety of organizations – connoisseur and "pysanka technicians…" [well-practiced pysanka writers]. We had to have technicians, because a connoisseur may know from a book while a person who writes herself,…the technique shows

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[88] The Ukrainian periodicals have included announcements about different competitions since the 1920s. For example, *Ditochyi svit* organized contests for the best drama writing, promising a valuable prize (1924:12). *Kaliendar Ukrains'koho farmera* organized contests of photographs dealing with life and work of Ukrainians in Canada. The same periodical also had writing contests (1927: 173; 220). The UWAC started organizing the embroidery contests in the early 1930s (Kohuska 63).

> something different to her…and if you get 150 pysanky, of course, those juries, they observed while my personal intention was to study [those pysanky], to "chew" [to study very precisely] them…[89]

Since the late 1920s, when the pysanka started being incorporated into a variety of structured activities, it was also connected with economic factors. If Old Country pysanky could be sold in some cases on the private level, National/Ethnic pysanky were actively incorporated into fund raisers of different kinds on a broader scale in Canadian society.[90] Collecting the money for the needs of the World War II,[91] for the "pysanka for those in need Europe" (this appeal is based on the ritual to give pysanka away as a gift),[92] for the needs of different institutions such as churches and organizations in Canada are just to name a few. Often, pysanka fund-raisers combined both economic profit and pleasant diversion. Such an approach is particularly applicable to the so-called "pysanka bingo," a popular form of a pysanka fund raiser in eastern and central Canada,[93] in which the pysanka was combined with popular entertaining elements of western culture.

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[89] *My maly 5 konkursiv tut v Al'berti …zadlia toho shoby vpiznaty khto pyshe pysanky i iak pyshut'…i shoby oderzhaty do muzeiu ti pershi zrazky iaki she zaderzhalysia v nashykh liudei po provintsiakh,…khotily vpiznaty khto pysav shkrobankoiu…To buly hroshovi nahorody. My braly do zhuri riznykh riznykh orhanizatsii osib… znavtsiv…i tekhnikiv. Vy musyte maty tekhnika, bo znavets' mozhe znaty z knyzhky, a toi shcho pyshe vin…iomu teknika vkazuie na shchos' zovsim inakshe…i iak vam pryide 150 pysanok, of course, toti zhurysty, vony ohliadaly, a mii intention buv shoby ia perestudiuvala, pozhuvala.* For a detailed description of one of the pysanka contests and its results see Nadia Cyncar's "*Visti z Edmontonu: Vyslid konkursu pysanok*" [News from Edmonton: results of the pysanka contest] (1972).

[90] The local and international exhibitions organized by the UWAC in the late 1920s-early 1930s attracted attention of both Ukrainian and foreign audiences. As a result, the organization started getting commissions for different kinds of art including pysanky from both Ukrainians and foreigners. In 1933, the UWAC developed the projects of selling pysanky among English audiences for collecting funds for the Ukrainian Pavilion for the International Exhibition in Chicago. The pre-Easter *Pysanka* bazaars have been very popular all over Canada since the early 1950s. Ukrainian Canadian women's periodicals such as *Zhinochyi svit, Promin'*, and *Nasha doroha* have included the reports on organizing Pysanky bazaars within different branches of the organizations all over Canada.

[91] For example, the UWOC organized Pysanka bazaar in 1940 in Fort William raising money for the Ukrainian Golden Cross (Protsiv 89).

[92] For example, the Winnipeg branch of the UWAC collected the money "for the pysanka" for Valentyn Moroz, who was liberated from a concentration camp in Europe (Chaikovs'ka 1979).

[93] Frequent reports on pysanka bingos organized by the branches of UWOC have been provided in *Zhinochyi svit*. For example, on April 11, 1967, a pysanka bingo was organized by Mrs. Plaviuk in

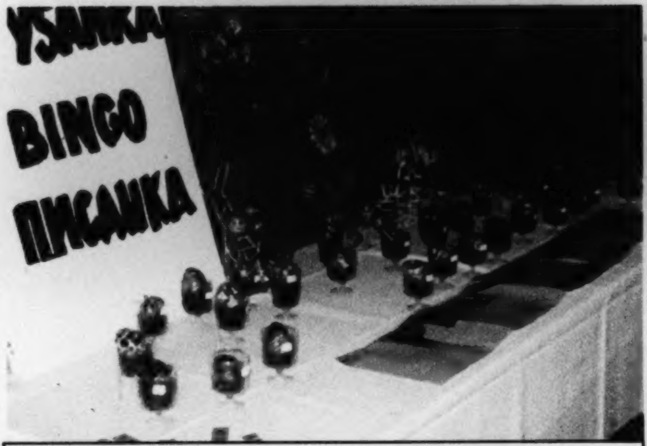

Figure 100. Pysanka Bingo at St. John's Ukrainian Orthodox Church's Auditorium, c. 2003. (Photograph courtesy L. Pohoreski).

Having been inspired by the UWOC's activities in Hamilton, Lesia and Orest Pohoreski have established the tradition of the pysanka-bingo in Edmonton, in the hall the St. John's Ukrainian Orthodox Church:

> This is where you play…regular bingo games but you only can win pysanky. It's a fund-raiser and this is quite popular. Let me rephrase. In Hamilton in my husband's parish they have a pysanka bingo. Many women of the church get together, write, donate eggs...They have *pyrohy* supper and pysanka bingo, and hundreds of people come to play just to win pysanky for their *koshyk*. So, when my husband suggested that idea to me a few years ago, I said "you're nuts." But he said "let's try it." So, we started it at our *hromada* [community] and it is something completely different. So, we had *pyrohy* supper and pysanka bingo, and we approached people within our church, that we knew that wrote pysanky, to donate…You play bingo and when you have to say it's for a straight line, and you call bingo, then you (there is a ball with the numbers), you draw a number from a ball and if you have number 8, you win pysanka number 8. They are all numbered. It is so much fun because *baba* [grandmother] can play and grandchild can play. Everybody can play, it's a family event, all ages.

Pysanky for the fundraisers of different kinds are usually donated by the community's pysanka writers.

Hamilton, Ontario ("From Activities of UWAC Branches" 1967), on March 23, 1979 Anna Mykhailovs'ka organized a pysanka bingo to collect funds for the building for *Zhinochyi svit* in Toronto (O.M. 1979), on April 8, 1987 a pysanka bingo was organized by the UWOC branch in Saint Catherine's, Ontario (Domynyk 1987).

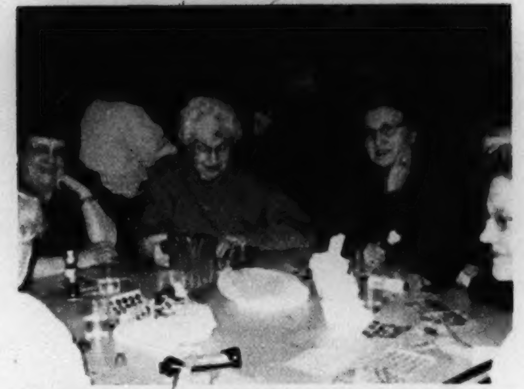

Figure 101. Women playing Pysanka Bingo at St. John's Ukrainian Orthodox Church's Auditorium, c. 2003. (Photograph courtesy L. Pohoreski).

3.1.5 *Meaning*

The magical beliefs connected with the Old Country pysanka were mostly lost in the context of modernization. It seems that the progress of education and science gradually replaced them with other thinking. The following example of Joana Janis is quite unique. When asked whether she believed in the magical power of the pysanka as the bringer of good luck, prosperity and health, according to her mother in those days, she confidently answered "I still do," and then continued:

> I don't know if that has any significance or not but I had four sisters and of the five of us, I am the only one that makes Easter eggs every year and so far, praise be to God, my health is good…maybe it does have a connection… One of my sisters passed away last year. The other three, they have more problems with their health, their lives than I think I do…[94]

In most cases, however, the purposes for writing pysanky within the National/Ethnic paradigm differ markedly from those of the Old Country tradition. The

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[94] However, Johanna Janis's creativity demonstrates a great overlap of the Old Country and National/Ethnic paradigms in terms of designs. Like Anna Zwozdesky, Janis owns a great variety of National/Ethnic pysanky. Some of them are shown on the pictures above.

National/Ethnic pysanka have become part of Ukrainian Canadian life, signifying "Ukrainianess" within the Ukrainian Community in Canadian multicultural context.

In terms of meaning, the noticeable change is connected with the perception of the pysanka by Ukrainian Canadians themselves. In contrast to the Old Country paradigm, within which pysanky were part of a customary lifestyle and/or old peasant worldview, within the National/Ethnic paradigm they became consciously accepted as the continuation and preservation of the tradition on the emic level. Marianne Baziuk explains that she writes pysanky "to continue the tradition…It wouldn't be like celebrating Easter, if we didn't have any pysanky…" This quote represents the viewpoint of all the pysanka writers interviewed.

Within the National/Ethnic paradigm, the old symbolism of the pysanka and its motifs, as interpreted in scholarly and popular sources, were reinforced and became very powerful. Although most contemporary Ukrainian Canadians do not associate them with any magical power now, they do believe that pysanky reflect such beliefs in magic in the past. This conviction evokes both pride and creative imagination. Often, consulting published sources, creative individuals embed their own meaning into a pysanka on the private level, as illustrated by Lesia Pohoreski:

> When…I became a godmother, and it was my godson's first Easter, I wrote him a pysanka…I put some animals on it…I was looking at strength, I was looking at health and luck…Then I inscribed on it "*Pershyi Velykden*" [First Easter] and a year because I wanted to give him…a memento from *khresna* [godmother]…for that specific year.

A similar example follows:

> I say… to my grandson: "I am giving you a pysanka with a symbol of an animal, there is a stag here; this is a symbol of happiness and health and wealth." I say to my granddaughter: "I am giving you this pysanka with cherries; cherries are a symbol of girl's beauty…I wish you to be not only beautiful, but also wise

> and happy" and so on. So, I would give something symbolic which can be read on the surface of the egg to everybody [in her family]…"[95] (Talanchuk, interview)

It is not at all clear that such individualized and literal applications of the motifs (symbols) were practiced in villages of Ukraine in the 19th century.

Within the National/Ethnic pattern, the pysanka continued to be tightly incorporated into the social and recreational life of Ukrainian families and communities. (The specific events changed however). Organizing pysanka parties, exchanging pysanky as gifts after church service on Easter or playing pysanka bingo apparently reinforced the sense of community and tightened the relationship among specific individuals within this community. The other issues related to the meaning of the pysanka within the National/Ethnic paradigm will be discussed further in the next subchapter.

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[95] *Ia kazhu... do svoho vnuka; "ia tobi daiu [pysanku] zi symvolom zviriatka, tam ie olen', tse ie symbol shchastia i zdorovia, i bahatstva..." , ia kazhu do vnuchky: "[Ia daiu tobi] tsiu pysanku, tut z chereshniamy, a chereshni tse ie symvol divochoi krasy,...shoby ty bula ne til'ky harna, ale i mudra i shchslyva..." i t.d. Otzhe zh, kozhnomu [v rodyni] ia shos davala symvolichnoho takoho sho mozhna bulo prochytaty na poverkhni pysanky ti symvoly.....*

2.2. The National/Ethnic Pysanka: Etic Interpretations

The name of this paradigm suggests two different parts with emphasis on either its National pole or its Ethnic part. Though their similarities are greater than their differences, a conceptual difference between them still exists.

The pysanka of the National/Ethnic paradigm, with the National part emphasized, was closely connected with politics. For political purposes, this pysanka was transferred into a new arena. In contrast to the Old Country paradigm, within which it was practiced as a part of a customary life (an attribute of Easter celebration), the National/Ethnic pysanka came to be considered as an art form on the emic level with the label "folk" consciously attached. Furthermore, such terms as "traditional," "authentic," along with the expressions "deeply symbolic," "passed on from generation to generation" and (others of the same kind) became purposefully ascribed to this pysanka by participants in the tradition. As a result of the transformation of the Easter egg from the ritual object into an art form on the emic level, gender roles changed in pysanka writing. It is now not uncommon to find men involved in this creativity, as shown by the examples of Chester Kuc and Zenon Elyjiw.

As we will see below, as soon as the Ukrainian Easter egg is transferred onto the western artistic scene, Anderson's theories of "western aesthetics" apply to the National/Ethnic (as well as Popular and Individualistic) pysanka more clearly. In Anderson's terms, the Instrumental (Pragmatic) and Formalist aesthetic criteria are dominant within the National/Ethnic pysanka. The Easter egg came to be an artistic instrument representing "Ukrainianness," satisfying social, spiritual and political goals, and simultaneously making what Anderson calls a "positive contribution to the well-being" (234) of people in the community. The aspect of "Ukrainianness" also became clearly associated with physical (formalist) beauty in the minds of both creators and the audience.

Though the Formalist and Instrumental aesthetic values are most important, pysanky often secondarily awake emotional sentiment among Ukrainian Canadians, relating them to Anderson's Emotionalist aesthetic criterion. As shown in Natalia Talanchuk's example above, people would often ask her following while buying pysanky: "Do you have any eggs with the designs of Lemkivshchyna (or Bukovyna) on them? My parents came from that region."

In the case of creators of this kind of art, the Emotionalist criterion expands beyond the solely cultural factors. All the respondents emphasized the great enjoyment and pleasure they receive on a personal psychological level while creating pysanky. Lesia Pohoreski finds it "calming, relaxing, [and]…almost like meditating." Moreover, sometimes writing pysanky has even deeper psychological effect. Sofia Porayko-Kyforuk shares her story of restarting pysanka writing as a means of healing (a break in her creativity was caused by the Depression of the 1930s). In this particular case, the Emotionalist aesthetic criterion is closely interrelated with the Instrumental one, involved for the purpose of healing:

> In 1948 I became sick with nervous strain and arthritis (caused by great worries and physical over-work [on the farm], when too many responsibilities fell on [one] pair of shoulders. These diseases of stress were just being postulated then in the research laboratory where I was then studying. Since, they have become widely recognized and accepted as being caused by too much stress and strain – O.H.) The doctor advised taking up some hobby to divert ones attention

> from daily troubles, problems. First choice were Easter eggs. (Porayko-Kyforuk 1969: 20, 31) [96]

In contrast to the Old Country pysanka, the National/Ethnic one is connected with a "formally learned" rather than "informally inherited" culture. Also, as illustrated in the previous subchapter, even those individuals who inherited their initial knowledge about the pysanka within their families in the context of the Old Country paradigm further enriched it in the context of the National/Ethnic pattern. Searching for information that would provide evidence of the significant cultural achievements of their ancestors, the participants of the National/Ethnic paradigm consulted various published sources and produced their own. As a result, such proclamations as "the eight-point star is a symbol of the Sun God" or "you always start [writing] with eternity [the basic vertical and horizontal lines]" sound as a self-evident truth, according to Eva Tomiuk and home-making guru Martha Stewart.[97]

On a broader level, in the multiethnic Canadian context, the pysanka became an "external symbol" of Ukrainian national/ethnic identity, defined by Wsevolod Isajiw as:[98]

> …a socio-psychological process through which individuals subjectively include themselves in a community of alleged ancestors or predecessors who share a distinct culture. What makes the process specifically ethnic is: 1) relationship to an ancestral past and 2) relationship to a distinct culture. (1984: 119)

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[96] *U 1948, zahuruvala na nervy i artyraitys /vid velykhykh zurbiv i fizychnoho perepratsiovannia na farmi de zabahato oboviazkiv spaly na odni plechi/. Doktor radyv vziatysia do iakois' uliublenoi roboty, shchob vidkhylyty svoiu uvahu vid shchodennykh turbot-problem. Perzhym vyborom buly pysanky.*

[97] "Martha Stewart Living." Ukrainian Easter Eggs (Eva Tomiuk of Edmonton is a guest of the American journalist Martha Stewart. She shows how to write pysanky). Aired Friday, April 2, 1999.

[98] Wsevolod Isajiw, discussing the symbols of Ukrainian Canadian identity, distinguishes the two types of – internal (invisible) embracing such factors as beliefs, values, ideas etc. and external (visible) such as food, language and artistic articles, including pysanky (1984: 119-123).

National/ethnic identity is constructed by a community consciously. The builders of the National/Ethnic paradigm transferred the Easter egg from its old sacred context into a new secular one, and expanded it far beyond its original purposes, consciously "includ[ing] themselves in a community of…ancestors or predecessors," manifesting their "relationship to an ancestral past" through "sharing a distinct culture." The pysanka became what Richard Alba would call one of the "cultural elements seen as a positive heritage worth holding onto" (76).

Though it is clear from the etic perspective that the National/Ethnic paradigm involved numerous innovations, on the emic level, pysanka writing within this paradigm was considered to be a continuation: "following the tradition in Ukrainian folk art." From the first days of their existence, women's organizations struggled for the 'purity' and 'truthfulness' in the pysanka-writing tradition, and against any foreign influences. "Let's cherish the purity of Ukrainian folk art…we have wonderful samples of our predecessors from Ukraine" (Zel's'ka 1985), "let's not change the perfect masterpieces of our people," "we have the great richness of pysanka designs reflected in symbols" (Onyshchuk 1988).[99] Nadia Cyncar expresses her attitude to changes in Ukrainian pysanka art:

> There was one lady in my neighborhood who wrote on commission, for colors [sarcastically] ! They [people] would choose for themselves. An English lady would be choosing: "I what to have [a pysanka with such and such] background because that will suit my décor somewhere (wherever)." So, she [the pysanka writer] would write it for her in this way. I spoke to her,…I asked her: "do not do that, if you want to sell, sell Ukrainian pysanky, not as she [an English lady] would request from you to write, to paint in green or sky-blue or violet

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[99] Such appeals have constantly been appearing in periodicals *Zhinochyi Svit*, *Nasha Doroha* and *Promin*, in the articles devoted to the Ukrainian cultural heritage, especially the pysanka.

> [sarcastically]. Anyways, there have been such individuals, with whom we have had to struggle.[100]

In many respects, activity in the National/Ethnic paradigm was very averse to change. As Klymasz points out, this activity:

> reflect[ed] a… highly conservative manifestation of the Ukrainian folk heritage in Canada…and act[ed] as a bulwark against the threat of cultural degeneration… (Klymasz 1972: 9-10).

"Earnestness" and "seriousness" of this kind of art were among the principle concerns of the followers of the National/Ethnic paradigm. Promoting Ukrainian culture was a serious matter, and joking about it was not acceptable. Laughing at the pysanka tradition was considered disrespectful to Ukrainian heritage. Light-hearted innovations or parodies of the Old Country phenomenon were seen as "violation of the tradition" and very undesirable.

At the same time, Nadia Cyncar, a long time activist of UCWLC, acquainted herself with the pysanka in a DP camp in Germany during the World War II (not within her family, as in their area in Ukraine Easter eggs were not written). She was among the organizers of the pysanky contests in Edmonton in the late 1960s-1970s and countless pysanka courses. Nadia Cyncar acquired rich knowledge on this topic by collecting and consulting a great number of published sources over the years. From a comparative perspective, we clearly see the contests and courses as new contexts, far from the original practices. All the while, however, these new activities are undertaken in the name of "maintaining the tradition" on the emic level.

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[100] *I v mene v susidstvi zhyla…odna pani, iaka pysala na zamovlennia, na koliory [sarkastychno]! Vony sobi vybyraly [sarkastychno]. Anhlichka vybyrala sho ia hochy maty background because that will suit my decor des' tam des' tam. I vona ii tak rozpysuvala. Ia do nei zvertalasia,…ia ii prosyla: "vy toho ne robit', vy iak khochete prodavaty, prodavaite ukrains'ku pysanku a ne taku iak vona vam skazhe namaliuvaty, farbuvaty na zeleno abo na niebiesko, abo na filiote. V kozhnim razi, otaki buly vsiaki, sho treba bulo zmahatysia…*
As illustrated above, experimenting with colors was very popular among many pysanka writers within this paradigm. However, Nadia Cyncar is a purist of the National/Ethnic pattern. She represents individuals who hardly accept any significant innovations.

I argue that the builders and followers of the National/Ethnic paradigm re-created the Old Country tradition, or, in other words, they created and established a tradition of their own, characterized by its own beauty, values, and spiritual power. Eric Hobsbawm and other scholars define such a cultural phenomenon as "invented tradition" which:

> …is taken to mean a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms or behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past…Inventing traditions…is essentially a process of formalization and ritualization, characterized by reference to the past. (2000 [1983]: 1,4)

Hobsbawm also argues that traditions are invented "…not because old ways are no longer available or viable, but because they are deliberately not used or adapted" (8). Thus, the phenomenon of "invented tradition" is not to be confused with "the strength and adaptability of genuine traditions…Where the old ways are alive, traditions need be neither revived nor invented" (8). These ideas are relevant to the process of creating the pysanka tradition in Canada within the National/Ethnic paradigm. The large Ukrainian women's organizations were established and run mostly by the representatives of nationalistically-oriented intelligentsia, as well as the descendants of the Ukrainian pioneers brought up and educated in Canada. For both groups, "peasantness" was no longer a way of life.[101] These individuals transformed the pysanka from its original rural peasant context into a new sphere, which better represented their class and social status. These needs "provided the catalysts that accelerated the crucial transition from old to new, rural to urban, and folk to national" (Klymasz 1972: 8). The new social, political and economic conditions provoked the invention of a new pysanka tradition, in which, as Hobsbawm emphasizes, "adaptation took place for old uses in new conditions and by using old models for new purposes" (5).

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[101] In general, the Old Country peasant way of life was gradually forced out by the transition to mechanized commercial farming by the 1930s (Martynovych 1990: 143-161).

The "Ethnic" pole of the National/Ethnic paradigm shares most of its conceptual characteristics with the "National" one. A significant difference between these parts lies with the issue of politics.

A strongly nationalistic outlook tended to decrease among the younger generations of Ukrainian-Canadians. On the basis of the interviews conducted, I agree with Frances Swyripa that "old-country politics failed to hold the Canadian born" and "a cultural ethnic consciousness and not a politicized national consciousness best defines contemporary Ukrainian-Canadian identity [of the younger generation]" (Swyripa 1991: 24, 26). In contrast to their nationalistically-directed ancestors, these people consider Canada their true home, while Ukraine is a romantic place from their grandparents' stories, rich in the wisdom of their ancestors and a colorful folk heritage.

These individuals also learned about pysanky through the various structured activities and published sources of the National/Ethnic paradigm. As a result, many of them became accomplished pysanka writers. Many are proud of "carrying on the rich tradition," "passing the tradition on from generation to generation." (Boyko, C. Hyshka, Sereda, Berry and others, interviews). Tanya Hyshka, who is in her late twenties and a third generation Ukrainian Canadian, illustrates this concept well:

> The reason I write pysanky is because I'd like to uphold the Ukrainian culture…and also to pass on the tradition… from generation to generation…I think of mom passing the tradition on to us and then we learned it through school, continuing on the tradition…I think it's a very beautiful thing…and I mean

> pysanky are always something that is very symbolic. So, I think you can learn a lot from them, but as well, I also believe that being a teacher, it is very important to be able to teach my children in the school, and for my students to be able to understand the Ukrainian traditions, so they'll uphold the culture as well.

Through the pysanka, the followers and representatives of the Ethnic pole of the paradigm manifest their pride of belonging to a distinctive culture and simultaneously contribute much to building Ukrainian ethnic identity in Canada. The same Emotionalist and Instrumental aesthetic criteria are clearly applicable in this case. However, the latter is connected mostly with bettering the social, spiritual and cultural aspects of life rather than with political issues.

The relevance of Anderson's Formalist criterion varies among different individuals. While it may be important to some accomplished pysanka writers within the Ethnic sub-paradigm, it may not be of a high priority for those individuals who write pysanky for social entertainment or "maintaining the tradition" once a year during the pre-Easter period. Pysanky of these people may be very closely related to those of the Old Country paradigm – written only once a year for ritual and religious purposes – simple and technically unspectacular.

No matter what writing pysanky communicates more strongly within the National/Ethnic paradigm – "a politicized national consciousness" or "a cultural ethnic consciousness" (Swyripa 1993: i) – it clearly demonstrates the need for a distinctive identity in the mosaic culture of Canada, and it serves as a powerful means to satisfy this need.

The concept of ethnic identity will be touched upon in the next chapter as well, while discussing the pysanka of the Popular paradigm. However, this identity was built on a slightly different level and with the help of slightly different means.

Chapter 4

4.1. The Pysanka of the Popular Paradigm

In contrast to the active struggle of the adherents of the National/Ethnic paradigm for "respectability" and "earnestness" in their art, a simultaneous Popular pysanka phenomenon pursued different goals. In the Popular paradigm, the Ukrainian Easter egg was incorporated into Canadian pop culture, manifesting a response to industrial and technological progress.[102] As a result, it became an "open delight in uninhibited experimentation and innovation" in terms of non-traditional materials and forms, "free of the strictures imposed by 'authentic national art'…" (Klymasz 1972:10). In this thesis, "popular" deals with objects, which are not actual Easter eggs (hand-written on real eggs); they are mostly machine-made items, imitating or invoking "real" pysanky. Therefore, I call them "pysanka-related objects." From a very conservative "art critic" perspective most of them correspond to the terms "mass culture" and "kitsch."

4.1.1 *Invention (Transmission)*

Whereas Old Country pysanky are transmitted in the close setting of family demonstrations, and pysanky of the National/Ethnic paradigm are learned through the more formal media of organized workshops and publications, Popular pysanka-related objects are created in an even less intimate environment, and they are produced by machine. Once an inventor comes up with a new idea for a pysanka-related product, specialized machinery can produce many copies of it quickly and easily. The mass production of such an object usually belongs to one particular company, and transmission beyond its corporate sphere is restricted.

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[102] The scholarly definitions of popular culture are very diverse. Folk art and/or craft are often defined to overlap with popular culture to a great extent. In this respect, if discussed in comparison with fine art, the pysanky of the Old Country and National/Ethnic paradigms would all generally be defined as the objects of popular art. However, since this work is devoted to the pysanka phenomenon *per se*, the definition of "pop" is narrowed in order to distinguish a particular contrasting pattern.

Having incorporated the pysanka or its separate motifs into their forms, the pysanka-related objects attract the eye through brightly-colored shop-windows, advertising pamphlets, commercial internet websites and other venues.

4.1.2 *Form, Design and Production*

Form, design and production of Popular pysanka-related objects are directly interrelated. Each type of product involves a different production technique. My survey is not exhaustive, but I will focus on several examples that seem to be most popular among Ukrainian Canadians.

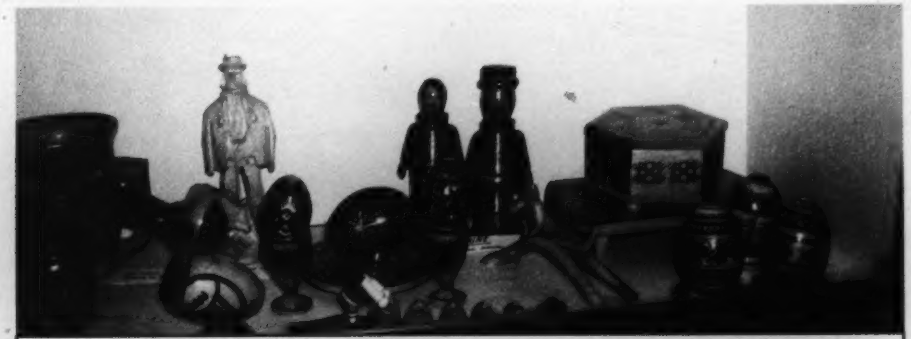

Figure 102. Engraved and painted wooden egg from the Hutsul region. UCAMA permanent exhibit.

Wooden pysanky from the Hutsul region became widespread in Ukraine in the second part of the 20th century, finding their way into Ukrainian Canadian homes as gifts from relatives in Ukraine and through commercial distribution. Wooden eggs were produced in Canada as well (Klymasz 1971: 10). There are different types of wooden pysanky, among which the engraved, painted and beaded ones are especially popular.

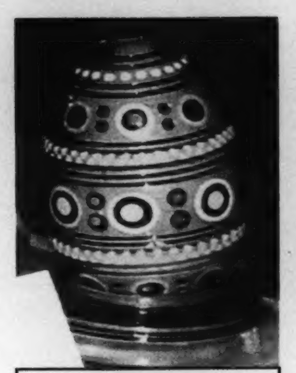

Figure 103. Engraved and beaded wooden egg. UCAMA permanent display.

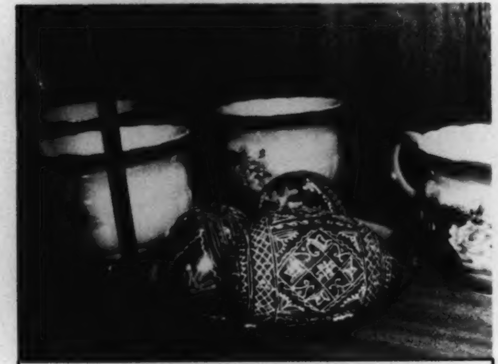

Figure 104. Painted wooden pysanky displayed in china-cabinet at Fedoruk home in Vegreville, Alberta, 2005.

These objects involve a certain amount of handiwork.[103] Wooden models of eggs are machine-produced first, and then are hand-decorated. Such handiwork, however, is usually based on mass production methods.[104] Engraved wooden eggs are characterized by ornaments engraved onto their spherical surfaces with special metal cutters of different shapes, depending on the forms of the motifs and the thickness of the lines. Painted wooden eggs are characterized by multicolored decorations, often imitating real pysanka designs. First, the background of a wooden egg gets covered with gouache paint of a certain color. This paint is usually mixed with glue so that it sticks to the surface of this egg better. Next, the pysanka motifs are painted on a colored background with thin paint brushes. The painted eggs are then covered with a clear varnish. For decorating

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[103] For a detailed description of different types of wooden *pysanky* see O.H. Solomchenko, *Pysanky ukrainians'kykh Karpat* [Pysanky of the Ukrainian Carpathians] (2002: 56-9). See also B. S. Butnik-Sivers'kyi's *Ukrains'kyi radians'kyi suvenir* [The Soviet Ukrainian souvenir] (1972: 182-6).

[104] In the Hutsul region of Ukraine, wooden souvenir production (including eggs) is a popular family business. Each person involved would often be responsible for one particular part of the production process. For example, when painting the wooden model of an egg, one person paints the background of it with one color, another adds a certain motif in a different color, and so on. I have observed it as an efficient and speedy process.

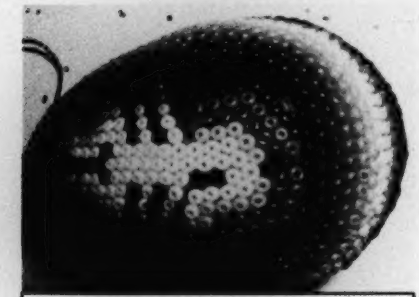

Figure 105. Beaded egg from Faryna home collection.

beaded wooden eggs, the surface of the egg is first covered with melted wax. Next, the designs are formed with beads placed on the egg by special equipment or by hand (Solomchenko 2002: 58-9).

Recent innovations in the production of wooden pysanky include their incorporation into a variety of other objects. For example, painted wooden eggs are offered as adornments in silver key-chains, or sawed in half, the wooden eggs become refrigerator magnets (Yevshan 2005: 6).

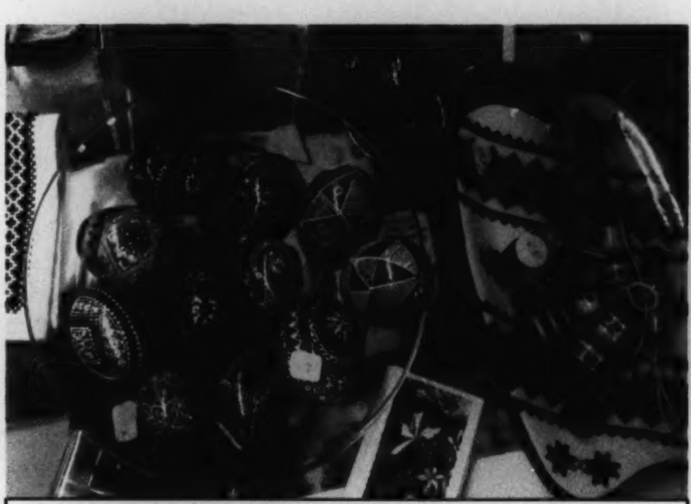

Figure 106. The UMC – AB display of "real" and painted wooden pysanky for sale.

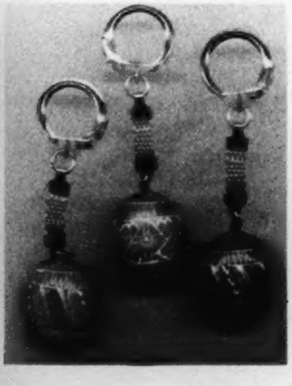

Figure 107. Wooden pysanka key-chains (Yevshan 2005: 6).

Ceramic pysanky are part of the popular trend of Ukrainian ceramic production in the Ukrainian diaspora of North America. White models of eggs are decorated with decals imitating patterns of Ukrainian cross-stitch embroidery in "traditional" black and red colors,[105] and thus Ukrainianized.[106] When they are being made, the plastic decals are soaked in water and then detached from their paper-backing and applied onto the egg.

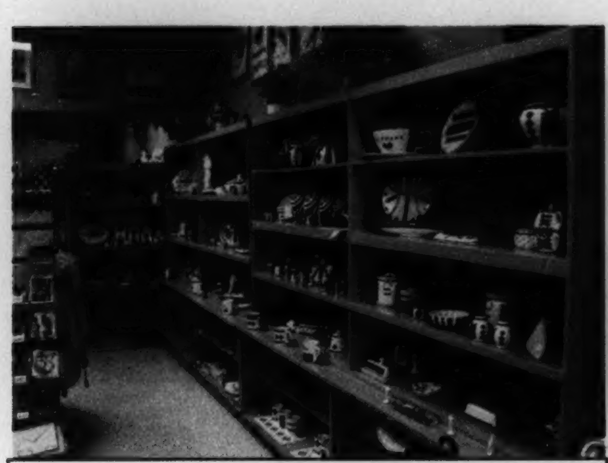

Figure 108. Display of ceramics (including eggs) at the Vegreville Floral Boutique, 2005.

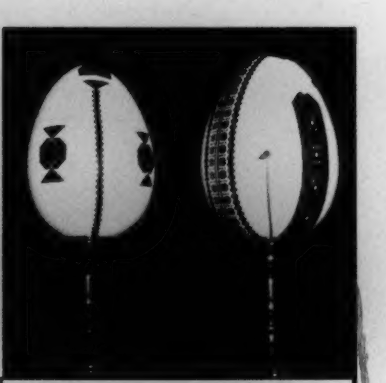

Figure 109. Ceramic pysanky (Semotiuk home, Edmonton).

Pysanka wraps are colorful decals with a variety of motifs, resembling both "pysanka," and "non-pysanka" designs. In the Yevshan Corporation's Easter catalogue, one can "choose from traditional geometric designs to children's whimsical scenes, Churches and colorful Petrykivka" (2005: 7).[107] To decorate the egg, such machine-made transfers are to be slipped around the surface of the egg, placed onto a spoon, and dunked into boiling water (2005:7).

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[105] Thousands of ceramic objects, including utilitarian bowls, cups and decorative figurines have been made in North America. For a discussion of these objects and detailed description of technological process of producing them, see B. Cherwick's "Three Genres of Ukrainian Ceramics in Edmonton" (13-14).

[106] Those who are familiar with a great variety of embroidery from different regions of Ukraine (in terms of techniques and colors) would be surprised that on a broad scale of Ukrainian Canadian communities, often only black and red cross-stitch embroidery from Poltava region is recognized as "traditional" Ukrainian. For a detailed discussion of this situation in Ukrainian Canadian embroidery see R. Klymasz's "Crucial Trends in Modern Ukrainian Embroidery" (1987). This phenomenon is relevant to what W. Isajiw discusses as selectiveness of cultural symbols (Isajiw 1984: 120-22). A. Nahachewsky explains the same phenomenon in Ukrainian Canadian dance of the National paradigm from the perspective of "the builders of the national dance tradition" whose "object…is not to 'save' the entire corpus of traditional dances that are performed by Ukrainians, but rather to promote a selected few of them to serve as symbols of the rest. In this respect, national dances can be seen as functioning something like commercial logos" (2003: 37). In this particular case, red and black cross-stitch embroidery designs became a truly "ethnic logo."

[107] Petrykivka is a village in the Dnipropetrovs'k region (eastern Ukraine) famous for its characteristic folk painting of floral and animal motifs known as "*petrykivs'kyi rozpys*" [Petrykivka painting]. Originally

Ukrainian gift stores in Canada carry pysanka-related Christmas tree decorations during the pre-Christmas season. Spherical ornaments of varying colors are covered with decals imitating the designs of National/Ethnic pysanky.

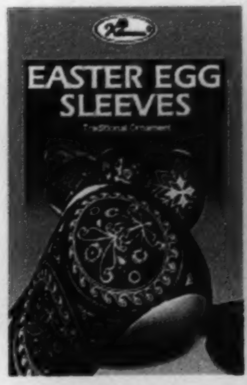

Figure 110. Pysanka wraps presenting pysanka designs (Yevshan 2005:7).

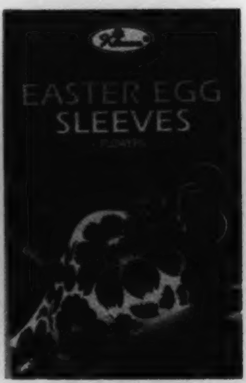

Figure 111. Pysanka wrap presenting "non pysanka" (Petrykivka) designs (Yevshan 2005:7).

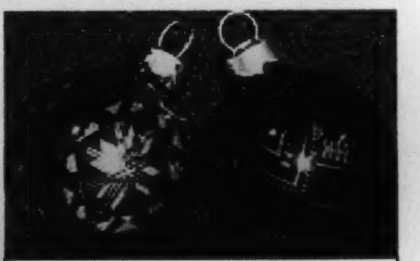

Figure 113. Pysanka Christmas tree ornaments. (www.ukrainianbookstore.com).

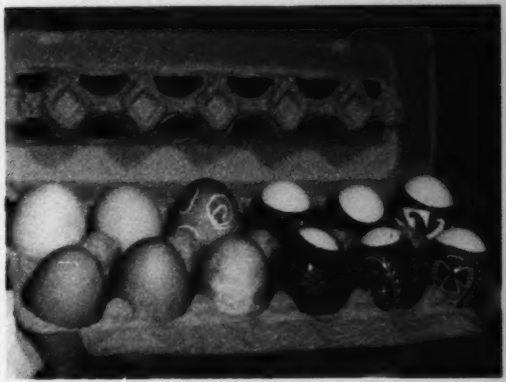

Figure 112. Eggs decorated with pysanka wraps at the Berry's pysanka party. Edmonton, 2005.

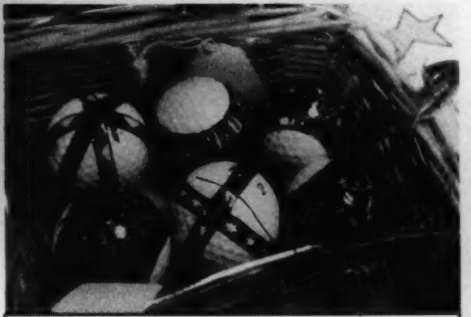

Figure 114. Pysanka golf-balls displayed in the Vegreville Floral Boutique, 2005.

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applied to walls and painted on paper for wall decorations, it was further commercialized and popularized in Ukraine through transferring its motifs onto the objects of both utilitarian (e.g., chinaware) and souvenir character.

Similar to the decaled Christmas tree ornaments are pysanka golf balls, an adaptation of pysanka decals to a different medium.

Besides the wooden or ceramic eggs and the mass-produced decorations for real eggs, the contemporary market also offers a number of completely different objects with images of pysanky on them. Among these items are pysanka mouse pads, pysanka puzzles, pysanka posters and laminated pysanka placemats, picturing collections of National/Ethnic Easter eggs.

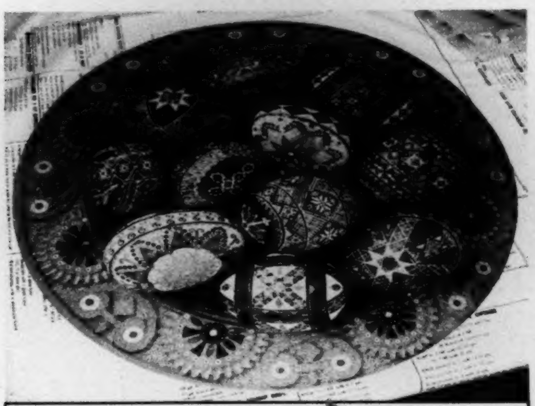

Figure 115. Pysanka puzzles (Faryna home collection).

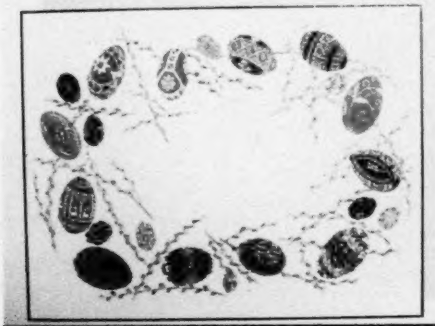

Figure 116. Pysanka placemats (Yevshan 2005: 12).

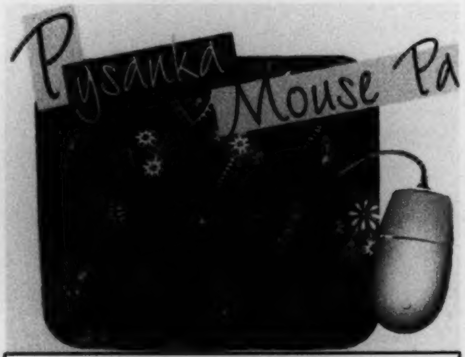

Figure 117. Pysanka mouse pad (Yevshan 2005: 7).

Besides printed materials, there also machine-embroidered Easter basket covers and serviettes with the stylized images of pysanky, adapted to resemble embroidery and incorporated into a variety of compositional structures along with other floral and geometric motifs.

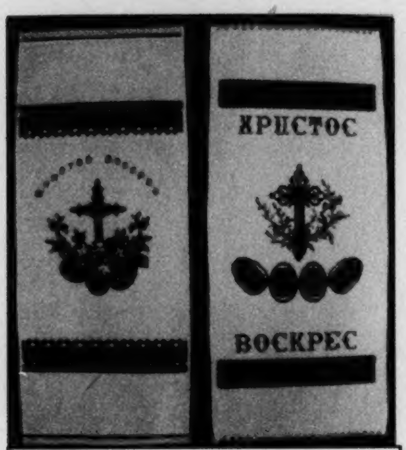

Figure 118. Machine-embroidered Easter basket covers (Yevshan 2005: 1).

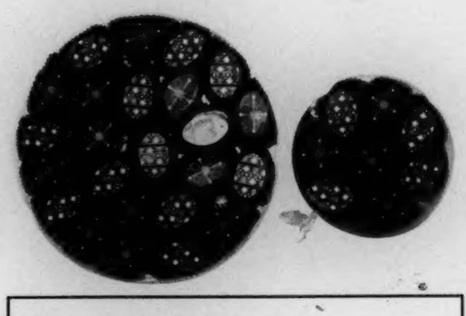

Figure 119. "Pysanka chocolates" produced by Chocolat Moderne (www. chocolatmoderne.com).

The American company Chocolat Moderne on its website (http://chocolatmoderne.com) advertises a special kind of chocolate named "Petits Bonbons." The advertisement is accompanied by two pictures of the round-shaped box entirely covered with stylized pysanka designs. The package includes a detailed explanation of the different flavors of the chocolates (caramels, ganaches, pralines etc.), each represented by a separate image of a pysanka.

The following two objects do not quite fit into the discussion above, in terms of "de-personalized methods of mass production" (Klymasz 1972: 10) because each has an author(s) and exists in only one unique copy. However, they clearly fit into the Popular paradigm in terms of their forms and designs.

The notable Vegreville Pysanka landmark was designed by artist Paul Sembaliuk and engineered by computer specialist Ron Reach. In 1974, this monument was erected in honor of the 100th Anniversary of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. The Vegreville

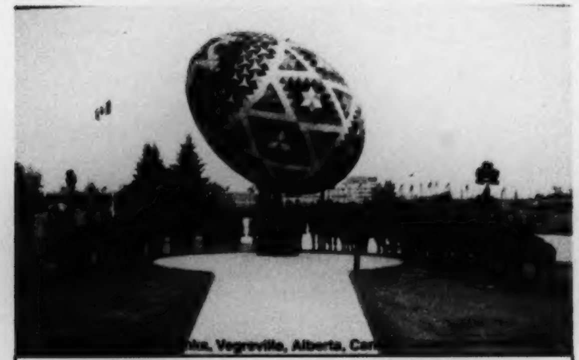

Figure 120. Post Card captioned: "World's Largest Pysanka (Ukrainian Easter Egg), located at Vegreville, Alberta, Canada with the R.C.M.P. Musical Ride in 1991." Vegreville: Finecolor Printing System, n.d.

Pysanka is a giant stylized imitation of a Ukrainian Easter egg. However, its geometric design is based on the combinations of triangles as module elements (Glebe 1991: 6-7, 36).

A "pysanka guitar" belongs to the band Kubasonics. The band is widely known for its humorous and entertaining music, which incorporates Ukrainian ethnic elements into very fast tempo contemporary compositions ("alternative traditional" as described by band leader Brian Cherwick).

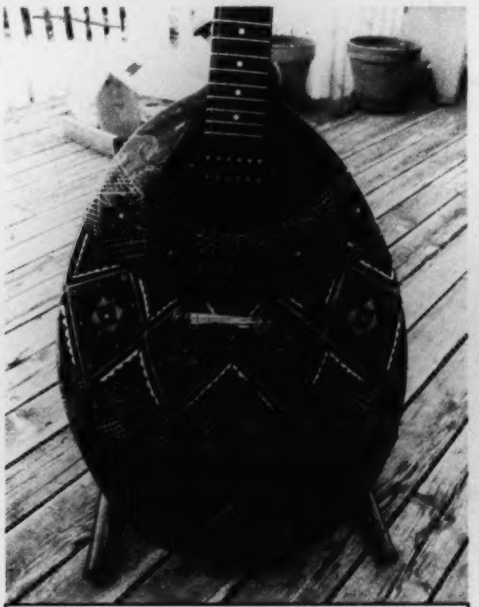

Figure 121. "Pysanka guitar" of the band Kubasonics.

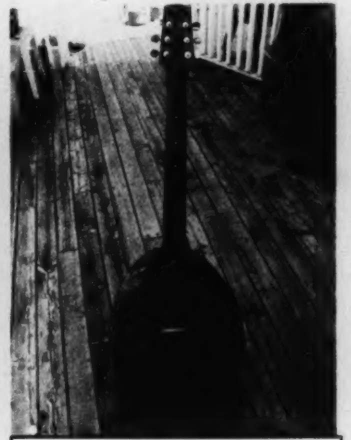

Figure 122. "Pysanka guitar."

The guitar was designed by Brian Cherwick and his colleagues. For this project, they showed a group of non-Ukrainian Canadians several pysanka designs from a published source and asked which one looked the most Ukrainian. The design chosen by the majority of the respondents was applied to the musical instrument, which had been rebuilt into an egg shape.

4.1.4. *Function*

Obviously, in terms of function, Popular pysanky are distantly removed from their counterparts in both the Old Country and National/Ethnic paradigms. Some of the pysanka-related objects are meant to fulfill specific utilitarian purposes, while others serve solely as souvenirs. For example, while pysanka golf-balls, placemats and mouse pads may perform their actual functions, wooden and ceramic Easter eggs, along with real pysanky, are displayed in china cabinets or on top of end-tables in Ukrainian Canadian homes as decorations.[108]

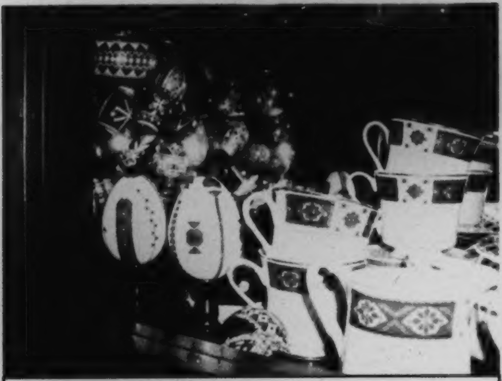

Figure 123. Ceramic and "real" pysanky displayed at Semotiuk home in Edmonton, 2005.

Besides having them as souvenirs and/or utilitarian objects, a few interviewees mentioned that their children used the popular items as toys, especially the wooden pysanky. Lesia Pohoreski remembers:

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[108] For a discussion of ceramic decaled items as displayed at Ukrainian Canadian homes with other things Ukrainian, and their meaning among contemporary Ukrainian Canadians see A. Kuranicheva's "Art and Ethnicity: the Expression of Ukrainian Identity through Art Objects Displayed in the Home."

> …when my father was alive and my children were little, one of the games that *dido* [grandfather] always played is that he would pull out the wooden pysanky on the floor and he would spin them, and they played with them.

In addition, "pysanky" made out of pysanka wraps replace real Easter eggs for some young Ukrainian Canadians. In this respect, they demonstrate the closest connection with the National/Ethnic pysanky in terms of function. Sometimes they are blessed in church on Easter. Pysanka wraps are well-liked by children because of their attractive brightness, or, simply, as an easy alternative to writing pysanky in the traditional fashion. I observed young Ukrainian Canadians excitingly working with pysanka wraps at Veronika and Daniel Berry's pysanka party, organized in their home in Edmonton before Easter in 2005. While the adults were busy writing Easter eggs in the traditional way, the children from the ages of 6 to 15 were enjoying making "pysanky" with the help of transfers bought at the Ukrainian Bookstore in Edmonton. Since I came after the party started, the adults told me that the children got bored and tired of writing pysanky with wax and dyes and were happy to switch to making them in a "non-traditional" and "fun" way.

4.1.3. *Meaning*

In general, the pysanka-related objects represent "Ukrainianness" like their National/Ethnic counterparts. However, in contrast to the latter, many of the former express ethnic identity in a humorous way. These objects have proven to be popular for many years among fun-loving Ukrainian Canadians. I often heard people commenting on such items included in their home collection: "Well, it is not a traditional thing, but still…it's fun."

Besides that, in some cases, pysanka-related objects unite Ukrainians socially, simultaneously contributing to their emotional pleasure. This is clear from the above-mentioned cases of Lesia Pohoreski's father playing with his grandchildren using wooden pysanky, and children happily decorating the eggs with pysanka wraps at the pysanka party. The same kind of emotional delight may occur while attending a Kubasonics concert and enjoying their "funny" instrument.

However, not all individuals respond positively to popular pysanka-related objects and their humorous manifestations of "Ukrainianness." "I love to hate it," said a friend of mine, for example. Such objects often elicit even a more negative reaction among the active adherents of the National/Ethnic paradigm, who struggle for earnestness of Ukrainian culture. To them, they are a desecration of Ukrainian art. This is exemplified in the comments of Nadia Cyncar:

> ...The *pysanka* has a face,...one would cover this face with such a "heavenly" light blue color...and would put a chicken coming out of an egg, and all the rest of it would be the pysanka...Or golf balls; [one] would give such a complete set of golf balls, "resembling" the pysanka, [to somebody] as a gift [said with scorn]...Jewellery, there is still not much harm in that,...they would cut a pysanka into pieces and embed those pieces into a chain, ring or earrings... this is something new, new creation. But there have been things, that sometimes I did not want to believe that something like this could possibly exist, but it is a "creation." It is like ceramic pottery with embroidery which has been very popular here...The pysanka has its own design...if one writes it, one should write it with pysanka, not embroidery, ornaments. Who can possibly embroider pysanka designs? And they would embroider serviettes for Easter to cover an Easter basket with those embroidered pysanky...People long for that [very sarcastically]...[109]

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[109] *Pysanka maie lychko,...na lychku bere rozvodyt' "nebiesnoiu" kraskoiu takoiu holuboiu...I tam klade iakes' kuriatko, sho vylizaie z iaiechka, a reshtu vsio ie pysanka...Abo* golf balls, *I to daruie takyi kompliet 4 golf polls vrodi pysanky...She bizhuteria, piv bidy...biut' kaval'chyky z pysanky I daiut na nashyinyk chy na perstenchyk chy na kul'chyky, to piv bidy, bo to ie, to nove, vytvir novyi, ale ie taki rechi sho ia ne raz ne khotila viryty sho shos take mozhe buty, ale to ie "vytvir." To tak iak keramichna posudyna, tut bula duzhe populiarna z vyshyvkoiu... Pysanka maie svii ornament, pysanku koly pysaty, pysaty pysankovym ornamentom, a ne iz vyshyvkovoho ornamentu. De z pysankovoho ornamentu vyshyvaiut' vyshyvky? ...I servetky vyshyvaiut na Velykden' nakryty pasku tymy vyshyvanymy pysankamy...Tse za tym hynut' liudy...*

4.2. The Popular Pysanka: *Etic* Interpretations

Although the Popular objects are very different in terms of transmission, form and design, production and function, they are interrelated with National/Ethnic pysanky in terms of several conceptual issues. They are both consciously incorporated into the process of creating Ukrainian ethnic identity and both attract a broad audience, although on a slightly different level.

As pointed out in the previous chapter, the goal of the politically-oriented followers of the National/Ethnic paradigm is not only to attract attention to the pysanka *per se*, but to impress the audience through an artistic form which would positively represent the nation. Therefore, the formalist beauty, reflected in the spectacular National/Ethnic pysanky, is one of the principle concerns of the adherents of the National/Ethnic trend. Some of the popular pysanka-related objects such as, for example, ceramic and wooden eggs as well as the Vegreville Pysanka can also be considered formalistically beautiful and accepted as symbols of the national/ethnic identity by some individuals. However, the Popular paradigm sometimes attracts attention with the help of a totally opposite means – parody in relation to Ukrainian heritage.

Linda Hutcheon defines parody in a way that is useful for the present study. According to her it is a "form of imitation characterized by ironic inversion…" (6). Hutcheon extends her definition of parody focusing on literary texts. However, it is clearly applicable to artistic objects as well:

> Parody…in its ironic "trans-contextualization" and inversion, is repetition with difference. A critical distance is implied between the backgrounded text being parodied and the new incorporating work, a distance usually signaled by irony. But this irony can be playful as well as belittling…(32)

The combination of the two factors - "Ukrainianness" (representing belonging to a familiar culture) and "surprise" ("difference") reinforce the humorous factor in some Popular pysanka-related objects. Combined together, they create what Danesi and Perron call a "craving for consumption" (279). "Ukrainian pysanka designs on the mouse pad. That is so funny!" may be a reaction of a person walking past a display case. The consumer aesthetic response is clearly connected here with Anderson's Emotionalist criterion. However, it is essential for one to know the National/Ethnic Ukrainian symbols to understand the Popular paradigm joke. For example, for a person who is not familiar with National/Ethnic Easter egg designs, a pysanka mouse pad, pysanka golf-balls and even the pysanka guitar described above may not awake a humorous response.

It is exactly the humorous aspect that differentiates, for instance, the "pysanka guitar" from "pysanka jewellery," which is consistent with the National/Ethnic paradigm in spirit (although it does not match the majority of the National/Ethnic pysanky in terms of shape). "Pysanka jewellery" is, however, still connected with the Formalist aesthetics and "serious" representations of the Ukrainian culture as it is produced out of actual National/Ethnic Easter eggs, in contrast to the "pysanka guitar," parodying the form of the National/Ethnic pysanka and serving as a humorous eye-catcher for an audience. (In terms of purpose, it is very similar to that of the *kubasa* [Ukrainian sausage] that is often served by the band at their concerts).

In the National/Ethnic paradigm, pysanky are described as "folk," "authentic," "traditional," demonstrating pride for the richness of Ukrainian culture. The same adjectives are used for the purpose of advertisement in the context of the Popular pattern (Yevshan 1-12). However, it is clear that in many ways popular pysanka-related objects are not "authentic" or "traditional" at all. Although in some cases Anderson's Instrumental aesthetic criterion is applicable on the level of producers/creators or distributors from an economic perspective, these individuals are not necessarily involved with Ukrainian-related items for strong economic interests.[110] It is essentially the sentimental element of "Ukrainianness" that keeps them engaged with these products. As Richard Alba points out, "persons who identify in ethnic terms…seek out cultural expressions for their feelings" (121). In this particular case, the producers' personal ethnic feelings are expressed in a popular way, while simultaneously contributing to building an overall Ukrainian ethnic identity.

Chapter 5 is devoted to the Individualistic pysanky, which are related to both Ukrainian ethnic identity and personal identity of a writer.

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[110] If predominantly for financial interests, the producers and distributors of these items would likely focus on more profitable businesses than Ukrainian-related objects.

Chapter 5

5.1. The Pysanka of the Individualistic Paradigm

Ukrainian Canadian pysanky in home and museum collections, as well as in published sources, encompass greater diversity than those of the Old Country, National/Ethnic and Popular paradigms. One can find eggs depicting subjects and motifs typically foreign for pysanky. On the basis of observations and discussions of such designs with the interviewees, I define a separate "Individualistic" paradigm of pysanka writing in Canada.

As the name suggests, the individual dominated over the collective in the artistic expression of creators within this paradigm. In contrast to the Popular pysanka-related objects and in common with the Old Country and the National/Ethnic Easter eggs, pysanky of the Individualistic paradigm were connected with manual craftsmanship. Like their Popular counterparts, Individualistic pysanky were free of most strictures and canons imposed by the National/Ethnic paradigm in terms of design. While the National/Ethnic Easter eggs were limited to "traditional" motifs,[111] those of the Individualistic category were characterized by "non-traditional" ornaments and subjects, written on the surface of the egg. Interestingly, pysanky of Individualistic nature were often the work of individuals who also actively produce eggs of the National/Ethnic paradigm.

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[111] By "traditional" in this particular case and further in this chapter, I mean the pysanky of the National/Ethnic paradigm as discussed in the subchapter "Form and Design" of Chapter 3. Many of those motifs, although foreign for the Old Country paradigm, were introduced and developed within the National/Ethnic pattern, becoming communal and therefore forming the new tradition. For example, the Trypillian pottery designs, discussed in the third chapter, are not associated with the Old Country pysanka tradition. However, in the North American Ukrainian Diaspora, they were actively used in pysanka art and very rapidly acquired a collective character. For this reason, I include them within the National/Ethnic paradigm rather than the Individualistic one.

The origins of the Individualistic pysanka paradigm cannot be exactly determined. However, it is clear that this paradigm is not a purely Ukrainian Canadian phenomenon. In the late 19th century, ethnographer Myron Korduba found some unique items with various inscriptions in some villages of Galician Volyn' in Ukraine (206). The inscriptions included: "*Moii liubii Nastusi* [To my dear Nastusia]," "*Slava Bohu – Slava na viky* [Glory be to God – Glory be Forever]" and other expressions. The pysanky of Iryna Bilians'ka from the village of Horodylovychi (Sokal' district in western Ukraine) were written in the 1930s. They do not contain traditional motifs from this region nor any other designs known in Ukraine.[112] This pysanka writer realistically depicted various flowers and plants as well as Ukrainian national attributes (the trident) and inscriptions connected with Easter themes on her eggs.

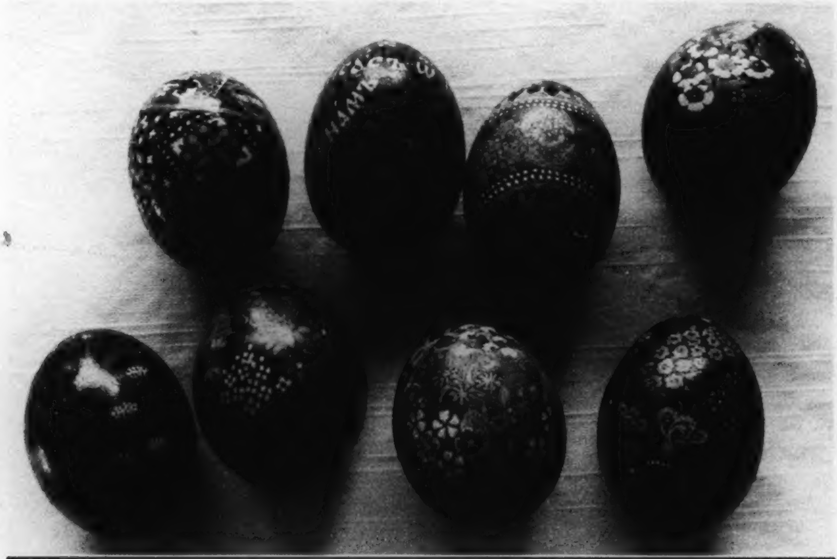

Figure 124. Pysanky of Iryna Bilians'ka. Horodylovychi, Sokal district, Ukraine, 1930s.

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[112] This collection of Ukrainian pysanky was brought from Ukraine to North America by the artist Damian Hornjatkevyc after World War II. It was inherited (and shown to me) by his son Andrij Hornjatkevyč, currently living in Edmonton.

The research conducted for this study shows that the Individualistic paradigm in pysanka writing existed in Canada since the times of the pioneer immigrants and the first generation of their descendents.

5.1.1. *Transmission*

The particularity of the Individualistic pysanka in terms of transmission is that it deals neither with informally inherited (as that of the Old Country paradigm), nor formally learned culture (as that of the National/Ethnic paradigm). Nor is it incorporated into mass production as in the case of the popular pysanka-related objects. The Individualistic Easter egg is connected, rather, with the personal inspiration of an artist drawn from the pysanka and his/her own improvisation and experimentation with the egg. This impulse may arise unpredictably among different individuals in various places. The individualistic designs do not seem to be transmitted further. They may inspire others toward personal creativity but one motif or subject individually created on the egg usually does not become communal. For example, after seeing some non-traditional designs of other individuals, a writer may be influenced by the idea of such improvisation, and become inspired to write something unusual on his/her own.

5.1.2. *Form and Design*

As claimed above, it is mostly the design that makes this pysanka type distinguishable from Old Country and National/Ethnic eggs with their own broad spectrum of collective motifs. However, due to the emphasis on the individual, the Individualistic pysanky do not reveal a clear pattern that would be characteristic for most artists in terms of design. Often similar in their purpose and personal intention, each individual's creations are characterized by a different degree of improvisation and experimentation.

The factors of improvisation and experimentation were briefly touched upon in the context of some innovations presented by separate individuals within the National/Ethnic paradigm in Chapter 3. These innovations include signing some pysanky with the initials of the artist and/or the name of a region to which a motif belonged in the past. Despite a certain degree of the "non-traditional" in them, I still consider such pysanky to belong to the National/Ethnic paradigm. Firstly, these improvisations are of a minimal nature. Looking at such an object, a person familiar with a variety of pysanka designs may still immediately associate them with what his/her eye has been accustomed to in this field of art. Secondly, such innovations gradually lost their individualistic character: signing pysanky became popular among many individuals. In contrast to this, the Individualistic pysanky are of the higher degree of improvisation and are not typically associated with "traditional" pysanka designs at all. This is illustrated in the examples below.[113]

Cathy Schendel, remembering pysanka writing in her family on a farm in Derwent, Alberta in the 1930s, pointed out that "sometimes [she and her siblings] would draw a rabbit on it [the egg], sometimes flowers… but as [they] got older, [they] learned different patterns…" This respondent clearly exemplifies one of the situations that give rise to pysanky of the Individualistic paradigm. It is connected with the inability of the beginner to write the canonical designs on the surface of the egg due to the lack of knowledge and/or skills necessary to be developed for this work. As a result, the child's fantasy produces the images of his/her world – rabbits, flowers etc.[114]

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[113] The examples included in this discussion are only a small part of those collected for this study. Also, the items collected do not represent the full picture of the Individualistic pysanka among Ukrainian Canadian pysanka writers in Edmonton – they are far from representing the whole Canadian scene.

In Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Yaroslav Goutor, an 18 year old beginner, wrote a pysanka with abstract images on a dark pink background and signed it along the egg's vertical axis with his name in Ukrainian letters: "Iaroslav." He commented to me that he did not know how to write pysanky at all, and so he experimented with what was coming out on the surface of an egg: wax would drop randomly on the egg, and he would make some kind of design out of those drops.

The following example is very similar. Elana Ludwig (15 years old), at Daniel and Veronica Berry's Easter pysanka party in Edmonton, said that she preferred making the designs up because following a book seemed too difficult. On that night, she drew an eight-ball inspired by billiards on her egg.

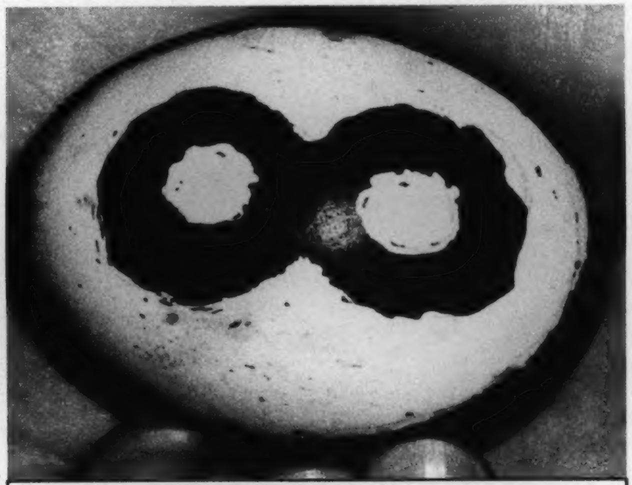

Figure 125. Pysanka "Eight-ball" written by E. Ludwig, 2005.

Daniel Berry, who is in his twenties, wrote one pysanka influenced by the movie "Star Wars," which he watched prior to the pysanka party. While most of the adults were busy writing "traditional" designs and consulting instructional books, and the children were excitingly making "pysanky" with the help of commercial decals, Daniel created his "non-traditional" Easter egg "for fun," and after being bored with following the "traditional" patterns. Inspired by the movie, he wrote its title on the egg and surrounded it with various abstract motifs resembling celestial bodies and spacecraft.

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[114] The respondent did not mean mimetic images of rabbits and flowers that may seem much more difficult to draw than, for example, geometric pysanka motifs such as "star" or "triangle." She meant rather the stylized (simplified) images that a child is able to produce.

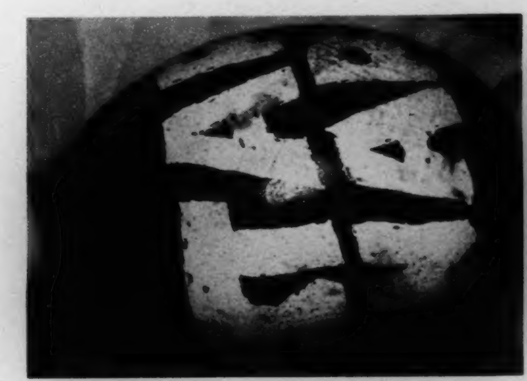

Figure 126. D. Berry. Pysanka "Star Wars," 2005.

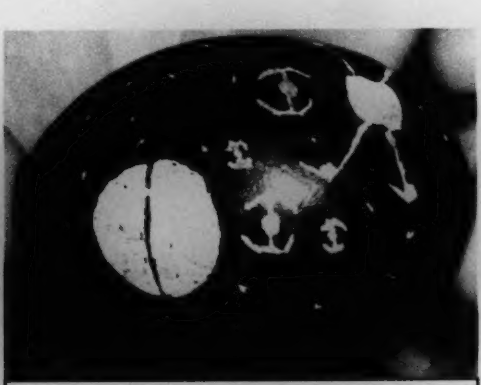

Figure 127. D. Berry. Pysanka "Star Wars," 2005.

Well-practiced pysanka writers also often improvise and experiment as they write eggs. However, their skills allow them to deal with much more complicated images. Sofia Porayko-Kyforuk's individualistic creativity provides some of the earliest Canadian examples found (1909-10). Invited by her neighbor to write pysanky for her family, she was allowed "to trace anything [she] liked." This pysanka writer remembers that "[a]t that time, for designs, [she] liked only flowers, sprigs

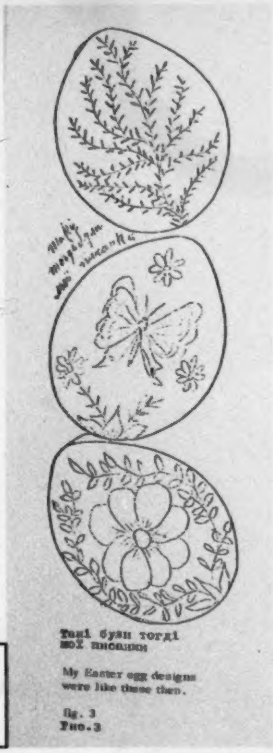

Figure 128. S. Porayko-Kyforuk's early designs, (1909-10) sketched by her in the 1960s (1969: 21).

of leaves and butterflies"[115] (Porayko-Kyforuk 1969: 19, 31). In comparison with the pysanka designs of her mother (fig.10-11), one can clearly see the individualistic innovations of Sofia Porayko-Kyforuk. Butterflies are not documented as traditional pysanka motifs in any region of Ukraine.

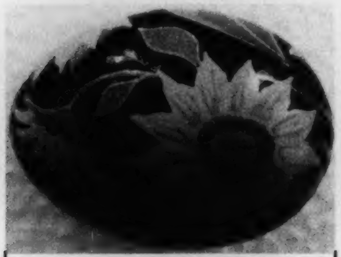

Figure 129. N. Talanchuk. Pysanka "Soniashnyk" [Sunflower].

Skilled pysanka writers and active followers of the National/Ethnic pattern sometimes incorporate improvisation into their creative work as well. Among a great number of Natalia Talanchuk's National/Ethnic Easter eggs, one can also find many pysanky with "non-traditional" motifs applied to the surface of the egg. One example is her pysanka with sunflowers. The respondent is aware of the fact that it is "not traditional" and clearly emphasizes the same reasons for such improvisation as Daniel Berry – the boredom of writing "traditional" motifs:

> …[this pysanka] is not traditional at all…but sometimes, after having written traditional [pysanky] all the time, you get bored, and you want something such…modern; in addition to this, if you have a lot of flowers in your garden, and I like sunflowers very much, than your imagination starts flowing wildly…[116]

Talanchuk's pysanka "Petrykivks'ka" [adjective for 'Petrykivka'] is inspired indirectly from nature, via the common national symbol of Petrykivka painting:

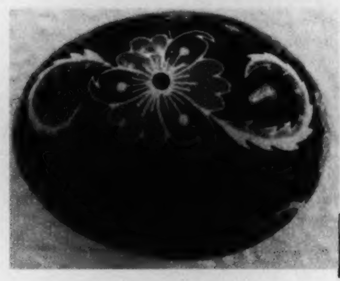

Figure 130. N. Talanchuk. Pysanka "Petrykivs'ka."

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[115] *Daly meni na voliu shchob pysaty shcho sama liubliu. A ia tohdi liubyla til'ky tsvity, haluzky i muteli…*

[116] *…vona zovsim ne tradytsiina…ale ne raz iak uzhe ty tsilyi chas pyshesh tradytsiini, tobi robyt'sia todi uzhe nudno, hochesh shos' takoho…suchasnoho, a she iak u tebe bahato soniashnykiv ie na horodi, a ia duzhe liubliu soniashnyky, todi pochynaie ity tvoia uiava priamo na dyko…*

> I read that the village of Petrykivka was very famous…there were paintings…and many prominent folk painters came from there. And I was itching to reproduce something of my own. And I made this pysanka on the basis of those designs. Because it…it has floral symbols…they mean,…this may be…like the sun, or it may be like sunflowers, and drops may be the Mother of God's tears…And one may interpret further…The black background helps a lot, sharpening red, orange and yellow colors and this simultaneously attracts the eye…[117]

The tendency to look for "ancient" and "traditional" symbolism in pysanka motifs, influenced by the National/Ethnic paradigm, is reflected in her creativity in the context of the Individualistic paradigm. It stimulates the interpretation of any pysanka in terms of meaning: "this may be the sun…drops may represent the Mother of God's tears."

Eva Tomiuk, whose work and personal convictions also fit into the National/Ethnic pattern, also likes to go beyond the tradition. Her signed pysanky were discussed in Chapter 3 as those representing a certain degree of the individualistic in them. However, in her collection, there are many Easter eggs with a higher level of improvisation. On one such Easter egg, she incorporated the Lord's Prayer in English into a composition consisting of "traditional" motifs.

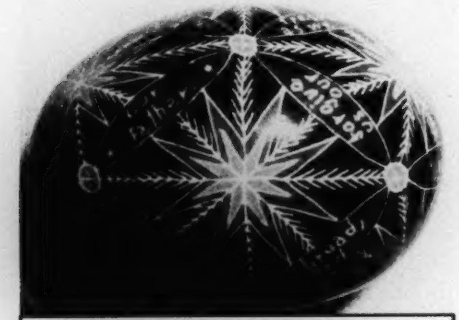

Figure 131. Pysanka with Lord's Prayer written by E. Tomiuk.

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[117] *…Napryklad, ia chytala, sho Petrykivka bula duzhe slavna…de buly rozpysy…i zvidtam pokhodyly duzhe slavni…narodni maliari. i mene kortilo vidtvoryty shos' svoie, i ia, vlasne, os' otsiu pysanku zrobyla z tsiei nahody. Bo vona…vona roslynni maie symvoly…vony oznachaiut, sho tse mozhe buty…tak iak sontse, a mozhe buty tse iak soniashnyky, a krapyl'ky mozhut' buty tak iak sliozy Bohomateri… I mozhna interpretuvaty[dali]…same tlo chorne duzhe dopomahaie, sho vystaie chervone, pomarancheve i zhovte. Vono tym samym vabyt' oko."*

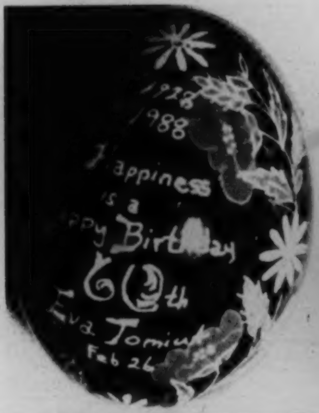

Figure 132. Pysanka "Happy 60th Birthday" written by E. Tomiuk.

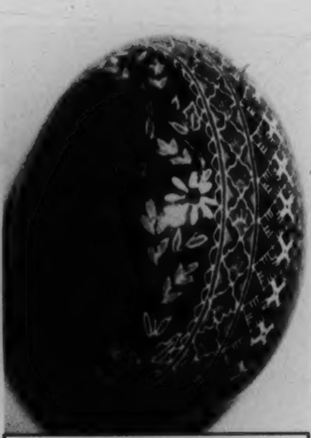

Figure 133. Pysanka "60th Anniversary" written by E. Tomiuk.

Tomiuk's other two pysanky are influenced by the tendency of the National/Ethnic paradigm to introduce the Easter egg into newer activities. The first one clearly shows its purpose as a birthday gift via the inscription on it - "Happiness is a happy birthday. 1928-1988. February 26. Eva Tomiuk." Another pysanka includes the stylized images of poppies and chamomile flowers, which are accompanied with the following inscription: " 1998. A day to be remembered. 60th anniversary. 1998."

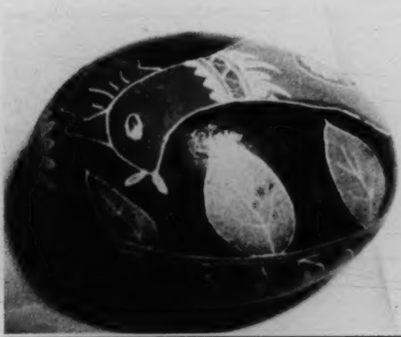

Figure 134. M. Makowsky. Pysanka "Pivnyk [Rooster]."

Marianne Makowsky's "*Pivnyk*" [Rooster] is the result of her own curiosity. "I saw a picture and I wondered if that would work on an egg. That was kind of a fun thing to do" says this pysanka writer, whose work is generally characterized by following the "traditional" designs.

David Makowsky's pysanky are much more removed from the Old Country and National/Ethnic traditions, in terms of form and design. Marianne Makowsky, his mother, briefly shared the story of David's creative work:

> Well, they [her three children] started writing *pysanky* when they were in Sadochok [Ukrainian kindergarten], so 3 years old. They have gone though various stages of writing pysanky. David found that he enjoyed doing a little more of non-traditional pysanky, not by just doing the designs but actually making patterns, pictures on the eggs. This was one of his first ones. He started with that and then I started experimenting with different eggs, I've got rhea egg, I've got some emu eggs…and then I went into the ostrich eggs and he just found it very relaxing to do when he was at University. He made one and continued on from there.

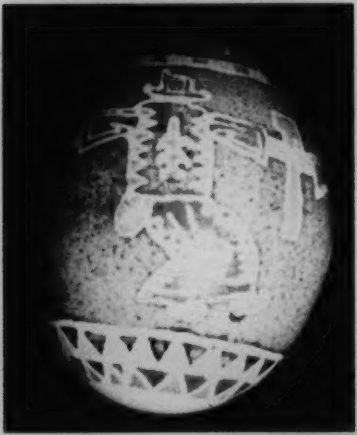

Figure 135. D. Makowsky's first Individualistic pysanka (chicken egg).

Having been inspired by the "traditional" pysanky of his mother, as an adult he switched to a different kind of painting on the surface of ostrich eggs. David's works were likely also inspired by the family's favorite artists. Prints of the black and white graphics of Jacques Hnizdowsky and Ivan Ostafiichuk hang on the walls of their home. Interestingly, it was Marianne Makowsky, who pointed out this possible source of David's inspiration when showing me the prints. David himself objected to this, saying that for him, painting those kinds of pysanky has always been a

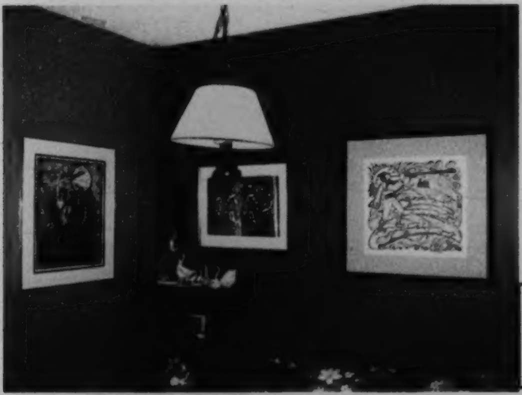

Figure 136. Graphic prints on the walls at the Makowsky home.

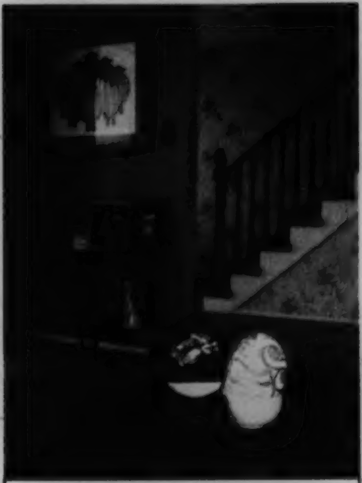

Figure 137. Interiour of Makowsky home in Edmonton.

stress relief only, and the black and white colors formed the simplest palette that did not require much effort in thinking about possible color combinations. However, looking closer at the prints on the walls and David's pysanky in terms of colors and subjects, one could easily be convinced by his mother's assertion. Even if it happened on the unconscious level, the influence of these works is obvious. Most of David's pysanky represent Ukrainian scenes resembling those on the walls – Ukrainian minstrels playing music, Hutsul men and women dancing etc.– and are characterized by the same palette of colors – black and white.

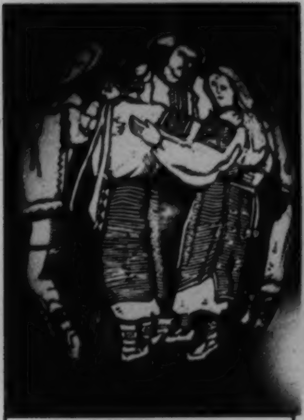

Figure 138. D. Makowsky. Pysanka, (Hutsuls dancing), ostrich egg, c.2000.

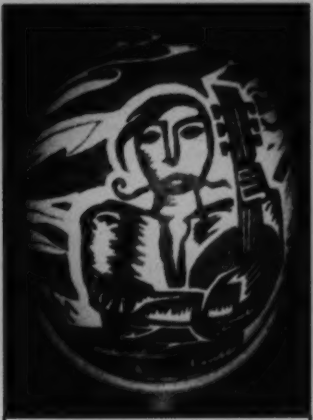

Figure 139. D. Makowsky. Pysanka (Cossack playing a *bandura*, string instrument), ostrich egg, c.2000.

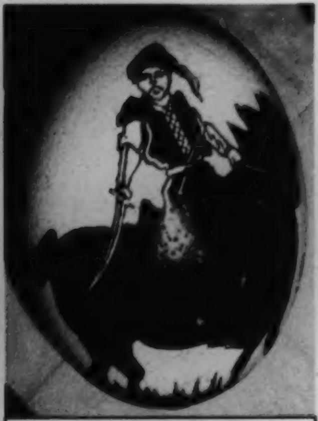

Figure 140. D. Makowsky. Pysanka (Cossack riding a horse), emu egg, c. 2000.

One of the pysanky from the collection of the Bohdan Medwidsky Ukrainian folklore Archives (which was acquired in 1994 at the Ukrainian festival in Dauphin, Manitoba), is painted in black and white as well, partly resembling David's works. A "non-traditional" subject for the pysanka – a dancing couple – is presented on a chicken egg (144).

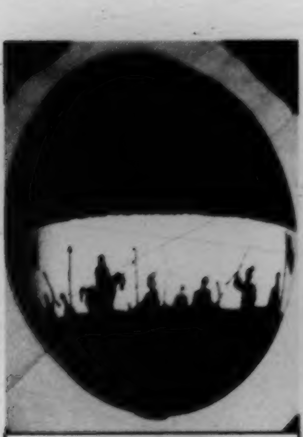

Figure 141. D.Makovsky. Pysanka, ostrich egg, c. 2000.

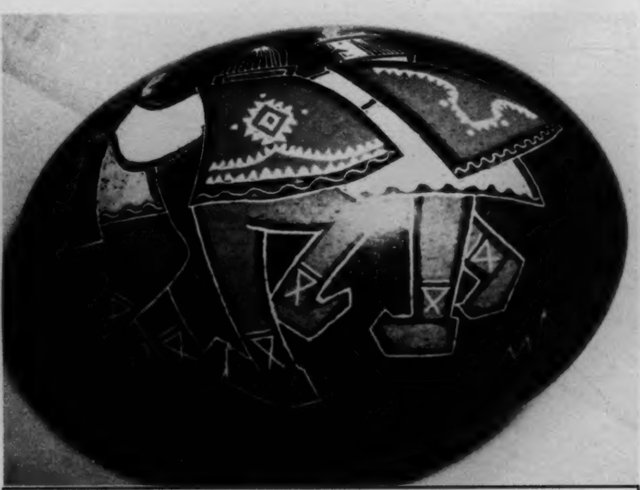

Figure 142. D Makowsky, Pysanka (Hutsul men dancing the "Arkan," Hutsul men's dance), c.2000.

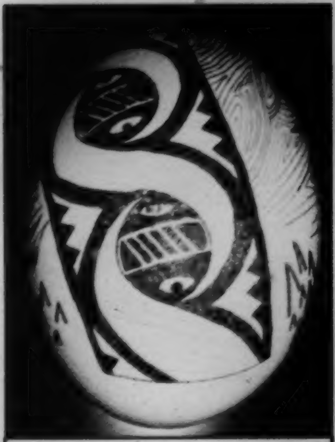

Figure 143. D. Makowsky. Pysanka (Trypillian designs), c. 2000.

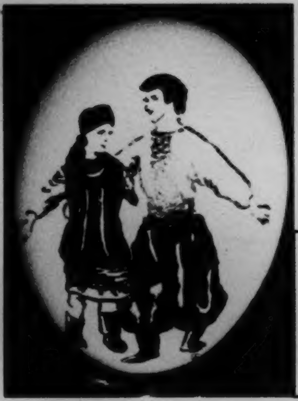

Figure 144. K.M. Pysanka (dancing couple),1994. (Bohdad Medwidsky Ukrainian Folklore Archives, 1994. 032).

5.1.3. ***Production***

As the examples documented for this study suggest, experimentation and improvisation with the pysanka within the Individualistic paradigm are connected predominantly with design rather than form and technique. Most of the pysanky discussed in this chapter involve the same production methods as those of the National/Ethnic paradigms. These objects were produced with the same wax-resist technique, equipment (regular and electric styluses), and commercial synthetic dyes.

However, on the "Trypillian" pysanka of David Makowsky (fig. 144), the lines are applied to the white egg with black wax, which is not removed from it. His experiment created an unusual shining-grey color effect. The pysanka with the dancing couple on it was painted with the help of ink and a pen.

5.1.4. ***Function***

The functions performed by the Individualistic pysanky are very similar to those of the National/Ethnic paradigm. In many cases, Individualistic pysanky are blessed in church on Easter along with their "traditional" counterparts, although this function often depends on their form and design. (David Makovsky' s pysanky on giant ostrich eggs are not blessed). Individualistic eggs can also be given away as gifts (M. Makovsky, interview) and sold (Porayko-Kyforuk 1969). In most cases, they are included in the private collections of the pysanka writers and their families as artistic decorations.

5.1.5. *Meaning*

The category of meaning within the Individualistic paradigm is complex. "He has made them [pysanky] just…for the enjoyment of making them," commented Marianne Makowsky about her son's work. Although fully accepting this assertion, I would like to emphasize that the enjoyment and pleasure received in the process of creation are often considered dominant factors in regards to any other forms and genres of art – painting, graphics, sculpture etc. However, in these examples, the egg was specifically chosen as a medium for creation, and specifically the pysanka served as the source of inspiration for the artistic expression. This leads us to the point that, like the National/Ethnic Easter egg, the Individualistic pysanka is also strongly connected with "Ukrainianness" in terms of meaning.

5.2 The Individualistic Pysanka: *Etic* Interpretations

As discussed in the third chapter, the National/Ethnic pysanka was tightly interrelated with the expression and construction of national/ethnic identity, manifesting "Ukrainianness." In the context of the Individualistic pattern, this phenomenon deals with the same factor of "Ukrainianness." However, in this particular case, it is more interrelated with the personal identity of the writer. The need to create the "unusual" in the general context of "traditional" art reflects sensitivity to the individual's inner life. In this respect, Anderson's Emotionalist category is important for the Individualistic pysanka. The Formalist category is relevant too, especially when it concerns pysanky of accomplished pysanka writers. Nonetheless, I consider the Emotionalist aesthetics in this case to be more powerful. If they were motivated only by formalist purposes, active adherents of the National/Ethnic paradigm could easily follow the "traditional" designs, further polishing them, improving their technique, and introducing minor innovations such as slight changes in color and compositional structures. However, what pushes them to go far "beyond the tradition" (Zwozdesky, interview) is the inner emotional factor.

In Anderson's words, from the perspective of the creator, the Emotionalist criterion of aesthetics represents the "artist's personal thoughts, perceptions, and feelings," that need to be expressed – "forced out by a pressure from within" (Anderson 244). For fun, for relief from the boredom of writing "traditional" designs, for stress relief, for gift-giving, or for the satisfaction of artistic curiosity – individualistic imagination and creative impulses are allowed, as Natalia Talanchuk says, to "flow wildly."

The subjects and motifs created on the egg reflect the individual's own understanding of beauty and personal taste. Michael Owen Jones focuses on the factor of taste when discussing aesthetic response, judgment and attitude in folklore. His argument, as related to the individualistic creativity discussed, is presented in the following quote. (Although it deals predominantly with the criterion of passive perception of certain artistic phenomena, it is very relevant to the active process of creation as well):

> Taste is a matter of likes and dislikes- which is generally acknowledged…[and in which]…one thing is certain: Everyone has preferences and these preferences are not standardized as norms of beauty. The uniqueness, rather than consistency of preferences, is so widely recognized in everyday activities that it is even expressed in Wellerism: "Everyone to his own taste,' said the farmer as he kissed a cow."
>
> …taste serves as the framework within which an individual responds to form-whether positively or negatively-and expresses a judgment. It includes associations, relates to the context in which form is generated or experienced, and considers such matters as appropriateness. Affected by values, beliefs and experiences, taste determines the nature of aesthetic response and judgment. (Jones 173-174) [118]

Personal taste, determined by values, beliefs, experiences and associations, plays a significant role in the individualized process of creation. With such guiding principles, one makes a "Star Wars" pysanka as a result of excitement experienced from watching the popular movie, a "Sunflower" egg influenced by surrounding domestic flora, or a "Petrykivs'ka" pysanka with motifs highly valued by the artist for representing the significant achievements of Ukrainian culture.

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[118] In order to illustrate his theoretical approach, Jones gives another example:

> "My favourite song is Stardust," remarks one man. Why? "Because the band was playing it when I met the woman who later became my wife." On the other hand, the same person might say, "I hate the song Stardust." "Because the band was playing it when I met the woman who later became my wife." (174)

In this context, one can see that often, the Individualistic pysanky represent a relationship with the artist's life experiences and a reproduction of the material objects of his or her surrounding world. The fanciful celestial bodies presented in the movie "Star Wars" written by Daniel Berry, the butterfly and flowers of Sofia Porayko-Kyforuk, the sunflower of Natalia Talanchuk, and the eight-ball of Elana Ludwig are all literal imitations of objects from each person's material environment. In this respect, and in contrast to all the other paradigms discussed in this study, many Individualistic pysanky clearly typify Anderson's Mimetic criterion of aesthetics.

Summary

This study is devoted to the cultural phenomenon of the Ukrainian Easter egg, or the pysanka. Having been transferred from the land of its origin to Canada, the pysanka became a potent and creative mode of expression among Ukrainian Canadians. The research suggests that its evolutionary process in Canada branched out into four different sub-traditions, named in this thesis the "Old Country," "National/Ethnic," "Popular" and "Individualistic" paradigms. They differ from each other in terms of transmission, form and design, production, function and meaning. To illustrate their contrasting nature clearly, the Easter egg of each paradigm is discussed within these key themes. Both *emic* and *etic* perspectives are presented in the discussion.

The empirical data show that the pysanky of each paradigm were deeply incorporated into the historical, political, social, cultural and economic context of the community or society.

The Old Country pysanka represents an unconscious continuation of the informally inherited tradition of Ukrainian pioneers and their descendents. On the *emic* level, the meaning of the Old Country pysanka, in some cases still carrying the old magical beliefs, was dominant. The designs and functions of the Easter eggs, as practiced in Canada within a family or a community, often represented the specificities of the ethnographic region in Ukraine from which a family emigrated. Due to the geographical isolation of early prairie communities from each other, the specific traditions remained very localized. These eggs were not really considered "works of art" by their writers, though they often are called "folk art" from an outsider's perspective.

In contrast to the Old Country pattern, the National/Ethnic paradigm (with emphasis on its "National" pole) was related to politics and conscious building of the Ukrainian national/ethnic identity in Canada. The pysanka was transformed as it moved from its sacred rural context into the secular urban one and was converted into a representative symbol of "Ukrainianness." In contrast to the Old Country Easter egg, the National/Ethnic pysanka became consciously perceived and practiced as an art form, and was considered "folk" on the *emic* level. Transmitted through numerous popular published sources as well as through various structured activities in different Ukrainian Canadian institutions, the National/Ethnic pysanka was learned formally by its many adherents. A great number of motifs, originally connected with different ethnographic regions in Ukraine, were disseminated to form a large composite repertoire for each writer. Often, different regional designs could be incorporated into one person's work. Also, on the basis of these motifs, creative Ukrainian Canadians produced their own compositions. The formalistic beauty of the pysanky became a great concern within the National/Ethnic paradigm. Well-trained and accomplished pysanka writers converted this phenomenon into a spectacular artistic object, seriously and positively characterizing the Ukrainian nation. Having abandoned many of the Old Country magical rituals connected with pysanky, the followers of the National/Ethnic paradigm used these objects in new contexts, related to new social, political, cultural and economic conditions. They extended the artistic tradition far beyond the religious Easter celebration, often practicing pysanky throughout the entire year. Although on the *emic* level, the National/Ethnic pysanka is often seen as "maintaining the Old Country tradition," I argue that the new tradition of pysanka-writing was founded on the basis of the Old Country paradigm for the new purpose of symbolizing a distinctive ethnic identity.

The pysanka of the National/Ethnic paradigm, with emphasis on its "Ethnic" pole, followed the same pattern of development. However, the political focus was much weaker and the Canadian-born descendants of Ukrainian immigrants focused more on cultural heritage. Having acquired their knowledge of the pysanka formally, many representatives of this sub-paradigm practiced this learned tradition only at Easter-time, manifesting their "Ukrainianness" and satisfying their spiritual, cultural and social needs rather than pursuing the political goals. If written only for the once a year Easter celebration, their pysanky are often not characterized by the same degree of elaboration and intricacy as those written by individuals with prolonged practice in this art.

Popular pysanky were connected with constructing Ukrainian ethnic identity as well. However, the methods applied for this purpose within the Popular pattern were opposite to those of the National/Ethnic paradigm. The Popular pysanka-related objects were mostly machine-produced and somewhat removed from both the Old Country and National/Ethnic pysanka in terms of form, design and function. The ethnic identity element was rendered sometimes with the help of parody based on Ukrainian ethnic heritage. As souvenirs or utilitarian items, these objects awake humorous responses from fun-loving audiences, highlighting both "Ukrainianness" and "surprise."

The Individualistic paradigm is characterized by the dominance of the individualistic creative design. This style of pysanka writing is inspired by the "traditional" pysanka, being related to "Ukrainianness" in this respect. Here, however, the creativity is connected with a high degree of improvisation and experimentation linked with the personal identity of the pysanka writer. The Individualistic pysanka is the reflection of the creator's unique personal taste, which is usually the synthesis of feeling, emotions, experiences and association.

The paradigms discussed in this thesis are presented, for the most part, in their "pure" forms. In practice, however, having branched out from the same source, they are closely interrelated and overlap in different dimensions. Pysanky of the contrasting paradigms may be incorporated in one person's work, as well as in a single private or museum collection. One may also trace a great overlap of the three paradigms within the same event. The pysanka party at the Berry home in Edmonton demonstrates this occurrence – with most of the adults following the "traditional" designs of the National/Ethnic pattern, the children working with pysanka transfers of the Popular character, and Elana and Daniel writing "non-traditional" pysanky of the Individualistic paradigm. Pysanky of different paradigms may be united by a particular key theme, such as their production technique or function. They may also share the same conceptual issues, such as representing "Ukrainianness" and being incorporated into the constructing of ethnic identity.

This thesis is a general interpretive study of the pysanka in Canada, focusing on the principal tendencies of its evolution in the Ukrainian Canadian context rather than on detailed historical observation. In-depth diachronic exploration of each paradigm could be suggested for further research. The data collected for this work may also be used for case studies focusing on the different patterns of pysanka creativity of specific individuals. In addition, research on other Ukrainian arts and crafts (e.g., embroidery) as they evolved in Canada may be conducted for further comparative study with pysanka writing. Furthermore, researching pysanky as incorporated into the creativity of Canadians of non-Ukrainian ancestry (which is not an unusual phenomenon in contemporary Canadian culture [Cyncar, interview]), could produce fruitful results.

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